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# Christianity

..and..

## Some of Its Evidences

POPULARLY STATED



SIR OLIVER MOWAT



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CHRISTIANITY  
AND SOME OF ITS EVIDENCES,  
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An Address

BY  
SIR OLIVER MOWAT.

Published by Request

*NEW EDITION, REVISED*

WITH AN ENLARGED APPENDIX

CONTAINING EXTRACTS FROM A SUBSEQUENT LECTURE, AND STATISTICAL  
AND OTHER NOTES.

TORONTO  
WILLIAM BRIGGS

1901



# CHRISTIANITY

## AND SOME OF ITS EVIDENCES.

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IF Christianity is true, the importance of our accepting it as true is unutterably great. It claims to be a Revelation to us from the Creator and Governor of the Universe, the Supreme God ; through Jesus Christ, described as the Son of God, God's only begotten Son, by whom He made the worlds and all they contain. It tells us that God is our Father, and an infinitely loving Father ; that He desires our love and our happiness ; that another life is to follow the life which we are living now ; that the condition of each of us after death depends on the character of his life on earth, and that from love to us He has made to us the Revelation. If what is thus claimed by Christianity is true, our acceptance

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of the Revelation is plainly for each of us a matter of the highest possible duty and greatest possible interest; and not to accept it would be the saddest of all possible mistakes which a man could make against himself, and against loved ones whom his mistake may influence.

### OCCASION OF THE LECTURE.

In early life I studied the Evidences of Christianity very earnestly, and with all the care of which I was capable, and came to the conclusion that Christianity was no cunningly devised fable, but was very truth. Since then much has been thought and written on both sides of the question; many anti-Christian publications for the learned and many for the unlearned have issued from the press, and been extensively circulated; many secular newspapers and magazines, on both sides of the Atlantic, contain from time to time articles or paragraphs referring to Christian doctrines in an anti-Christian spirit, or treating Christianity itself as an exploded fable. I therefore became anxious, for my own satisfaction as well as for other reasons, to consider the whole subject anew, before my intellectual faculties should begin to show diminished vigor, and with whatever advantage half a century of mental training in the discharge of judicial, professional, legislative and public duties might have given to me. On so momentous a subject it is most important to know, as far as one can know, the exact truth, and to be in a position to give a reason for his faith. Having made some progress in this new investigation before leaving home in 1890 with my family for a few weeks of rest and recuperation among the mountains of New Hampshire, I took with me a number of my books, in order that in quiet there I might continue the study. My plan in reading was, to make extracts and notes of statements and points, pro and con, which

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I thought deserved or demanded special remembrance or further thought. It was customary at the hotel to have an afternoon Sunday service for the guests and employees. This service had usually been conducted by a distinguished clergyman from Washington, the principal of Howard University. On the last Sabbath of my sojourn the learned doctor had been unexpectedly called away to preach elsewhere, and the manager of the hotel requested one or other of the lay guests to assist in providing some substitute for the usual service on that day. After consideration, and as nothing more satisfactory could be arranged, I hastily threw into the form of a lecture some of my extracts and notes which showed part of the Christian side of the evidential controversy; and this lecture I gave with some acceptance to the accustomed Sunday afternoon audience, in connection with a service of song conducted by others.

Neither in my studies nor in the preparation of the lecture had I any thought of publication. The lecture, somewhat revised, I afterwards, at the request of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, repeated at Woodstock, in North Oxford, which I represented at the time, and had represented for many years, in the Provincial Legislature of Ontario. I subsequently consented to the publication of the lecture in pamphlet form. The following is this lecture with a few additional sentences and some additional quotations from non-Christian writers, and a few changes of language.

### PRESENT STATE OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF.

In spite of all the attacks on Christianity since it was founded, and in spite of the agnosticism which has recently been taught in high quarters, there never before was a time when so large a proportion of the world's population had faith in some form of Christianity as is

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the case to-day ; never a time in which there were so many Christian churches, or in which the churches had so large a membership ; never a time in which there was more activity in Christian work ; never a time in which the contributions to Christian objects at home and abroad were so liberal ; never a time in which there were so many true and earnest believers ; and never a time in which the active defenders of Christianity were more able, more learned, more earnest or more numerous. Among the educated classes of English-speaking Europe and America, faith in Christianity was far more general in the nineteenth century than it was in the eighteenth, and is more general to-day than it was fifty years ago.

I read, a few years ago, in one of our Ontario journals, an estimate taken from the *New York Evangelist*, and prepared, it was said, with much labor and care, to the effect that in the United States during the year 1889 there had been an increase of over a million (1,089,853) church members ; more than 4,800 (4,867) ministers ; and more than 8,000 (8,494) churches. There has been a large increase in all these particulars



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in Canada also, though I have not the exact figures. By the Dominion census of Canada, 1881, it appeared that out of a population of 4,324,810, only 2,634 had been returned as having no religion ; and nearly all the rest were returned as professing some form of Christianity. The Canadian census of the year 1901 has not yet been taken (March, 1901). I may add that I am not aware of one organized society of either agnostics or infidels in the whole Dominion, except Toronto ; and I know of but one avowedly anti-Christian journal, and in this journal it has repeatedly been stated that it did not pay the expenses of its publication.

But while all this is so, still there are unbelievers scattered amongst Canadians everywhere, as well as among all classes of society in Europe and the United States, and among both the learned and the unlearned. Some of these unbelievers are so because they do not want to believe that Christianity is true ; but that is not the explanation of unbelief in all cases. Some disbelieve because they honestly think, and may even regret to think, that some objections against the evidences of Christianity

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are stronger than the arguments in its favor; and probably all of us know unbelievers who in their social relations are upright, genial and benevolent, and whose lives generally are, to human observation, as irreproachable as those of average Christians. So in classic history we read of some non-Christians who appeared, as regards conduct and spirit, to have been "almost Christians"; and in the present age there are writers who maintain "an adverse position towards the truth of our religion," and yet of whom so eminent a defender of Christianity as Archdeacon Farrar speaks as "men who have deepened our love for all that is great in conduct and pure in thought, and who in their stainless lives and noble utterances give the unconscious testimony of minds 'naturally Christian';" an expression for which Tertulian is quoted. Christians must profoundly regret that such men as these have not the precious faith in Christianity that Christians have; and that they are "natural" Christians only, or "almost" Christians, and are not "altogether" Christians.

It is proper to remember that for none of us is

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the question one between the Christian religion and some other. For us the paganism of the Greeks and Romans of former ages is nothing ; for us Confucianism is nothing ; Brahminism is nothing ; Buddhism is nothing ; Zoroastrianism is nothing ; Mohammedanism is nothing ; and every other cult is nothing. If Christianity is a delusion, the whole human race is, and has been always, without a true religion ; and men in that case know nothing of the world of spirits—nothing of the relations between God and man ; the support which religion has heretofore afforded to morality and order is at an end ; and the whole subject of a future life is in thick darkness.

### BENEFICIAL INFLUENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is to be remembered that, from even the standpoint of earth and time, faith in Christianity is not to be hastily rejected and opposed ; that faith in it is in the interest of the human race in even this world ; is in the interest of civilization ; in the interest of honesty, truthfulness, purity and benevolence ; in the interest of all the virtues which make life happy ; for

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Christianity makes all the virtues obligatory on us, and supplies powerful reasons, motives and incentives of its own for the practice and love of the virtues. This has been felt and acknowledged even by distinguished critics who do not recognize the supernatural authority of Christianity. Christianity is a religion of love. It teaches that God is love, and is to those who love Him the most lovable of all objects of love. According to Christian doctrine, God is nearer to us than father or mother, than wife or child, than brother or sister ; we owe to Him all the blessings of life ; He is our Creator, our Redeemer, our Bountiful Benefactor ; every good gift comes from Him ; He so loved the world—so loved us—as to send into the world His only-begotten and eternal Son to be a propitiation for our sins. It was from love to us that Christ came and taught and suffered, and died the agonising death of the cross ; and, as a result, whoever now believes on Him, and earnestly and truly accepts Him, shall have an everlasting life of unspeakable joy and happiness and purity.

Consider in this view what are some of the

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### PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.

An all-seeing and all-observing God ; a God of infinite love ; an infinite and loving Saviour ; immortality ; a heaven and a hell ; heaven, with its gradations of blessedness, as appears from the parable of the talents and other Scriptural statements, but with blessings so great for those who love God that we are told : “ Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him ” ; and hell, with its gradations of suffering, as there are gradations of wickedness, where some may receive few stripes, and some many, and where it may be much more tolerable, or less intolerable, for some than for others, but which is designated as being, for those consigned to it for punishment, a place of fire, of weeping and gnashing of teeth, a place of blackness and darkness—words and expressions which, whether taken figuratively or literally, or however interpreted, are well fitted to rouse sinning sleepers from their sleep of sin, if anything could.

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Independently of religious motives, it may be said with considerable truth that honesty is the best policy ; that truthfulness and kindness and benevolence on our part tend to beget these qualities on the part of others towards us ; that, other things being equal, a virtuous life is happier than a life which is not virtuous ; that morality is beautiful ; that self-sacrifice is noble, etc. But all experience shows that without the sanctions of religion these statements have practical weight with but few ; and whatever value such statements possess is not excluded by the Christian system or by Christian doctrine. Christianity, however, adds other considerations infinitely more powerful. Of these others one

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is its Founder—is Jesus himself, His Person, His Life, and His Spirit, as all these are depicted in the Gospels. In Christian doctrine, He is the great central truth, the great central fact, the fact of facts. Faith in His teachings ; faith in His own relation to those teachings ; faith in Him as the truest, and best, and dearest of friends ; faith that He knew all He claimed to



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know, and did all the Gospels say He did, and that He was and is all that the Gospel writings represent Him to be; faith in Him as God-man, a crucified and risen Saviour, who laid down His life for our sins, and took it again, and who still lives, and still loves, and will forever live and love; who is One with the Father, and with whom, and with the Father, those who believe, and trust, and love, and serve, may hereafter dwell everlastingly—this faith worketh in the world by love; is fruitful in right-living and in all good works; gives “victory over the world”; and (according to evangelical doctrine) justifies, sanctifies and saves.

It is matter alike of Christian dogma and of actual experience that to love Jesus, the Son of God, is to love God the Father, and to love men everywhere, and to be eager to do good. The religion of Jesus is shown by experience to be adapted to every race, civilized and uncivilized, and to every class and condition of men everywhere. Jesus has had, and still has, those who love and obey Him amongst men in every stage both of civilization and barbarism, and in every part of the world; amongst men of the

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mightiest intellect and of the lowest ; amongst men of the highest culture, and of the lowest culture ; and amongst men who had previously been flagrant sinners, as well as amongst those who had always lived decent lives. Even unbelievers in Him as a superhuman person bow down to Him as a man of surpassing spiritual and moral excellences, and of surpassing genius also. Whatever unbelievers may sometimes say against the churches or their creeds, their ministers or their members, few of such non-Christians have anything to say against the great and good Founder of Christianity. On the contrary, of Him they feel constrained to declare with Pilate, " I find no fault in this man." Many of them admit that He was the one perfect man of the human race. Christians believe that, being so Great, and Good, and being in all respects Perfect, He was more than man ; that He was the Lord from Heaven. On these points I shall say more hereafter.

The beneficial effect of His religion on those who receive it is beyond question. It is within the personal knowledge of every observer that the best characters are made still better by it,

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and that many who were sunk in vice and degradation have been reformed and regenerated by its influence. Examples of this abound in the history of all Christian churches, and of all societies established for the propagation of the Christian faith. Many such cases have occurred under the influence of the religious organizations of recent origin, as well as those of older date ; of, for example, Young Men's Christian Associations, Societies of Christian Endeavor, the Salvation Army, and the like. As to the Salvation Army, many of its officers and leaders are inferior in culture to the clergy of the various denominations, and yet they have had wonderful success ; they make up for inferiority of culture by their strong faith in the Christian doctrines and their deep love for the Father and the Son and for all the Father loves. This faith and this love have in all ages and amongst all peoples been the most effective weapons—the Armstrong guns and Lee-Metford rifles—in the warfare against unrighteousness.

Can it be that this mighty power for good, which has been active for more than nineteen centuries, rests on mere fable, and must be

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given up? In that question all of us are mightily concerned.

### NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

The evidences of Christianity are of many kinds, such as—(1) antecedent prophecies claimed to have been fulfilled in Christ and subsequent history ; (2) miracles claimed to have been wrought by Christ and His Apostles ; (3) the character of the teachings of Christ in connection with the life He lived, the death He died, and His resurrection from the dead, as together showing Him to be Divine ; (4) the general suitability of His religion to the circumstances and needs of human nature everywhere ; (5) the active and successful propagation of His religion after His death under circumstances which could not have been overcome as they were if the religion had not been true ; (6) the witness of the Spirit in the heart of the individual Christian, according to the saying of Jesus as given by the Apostle John : “ If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself ” ; and (7) some other con-

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siderations which may not come under any of these heads. I can refer to some only of these evidences, and to any but very briefly ; the literature on the subject would fill a large library ; and anything like an adequate presentation at the present day of all the known evidences would require many volumes. I shall select for my present statement some of those arguments which just now impress most strongly my own mind, and shall notice two or three of the principal difficulties which sometimes give uneasiness to inquirers.

It is a matter of common observation that, where there is not some familiarity with the grounds of an intelligent faith, the faith of education is apt to be disturbed, and doubts are created by objections which would otherwise have no force. It is with honest doubters, and honest unbelievers, among ordinary intelligent people, that my lecture has to do.

In my recent readings on the subject, I found that, on the one hand, Christian apologists admit error in some of the positions of former apologists ; and, on the other hand, some positions formerly taken by anti-Christian writers

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are to all intents and purposes abandoned now, except by the most unscrupulous or most prejudiced ; and some material things in the Christian argument formerly controverted are now admitted by candid non-Christian or unorthodox critics.

I shall state *first* what some of the things are which opponents of Christianity now admit, and which an ordinary inquirer may reasonably begin his own investigations by assuming to be correct. We need not imagine that such men, with all their great learning and ability, and notwithstanding their antagonism to Christianity, have deliberately admitted in its favor more than our own candid study would show to be correct.

*Secondly:* I shall mention other facts, or alleged facts, which are not admitted by non-Christian critics ; and I shall give you some of the evidences on which these unadmitted facts may be maintained. In regard to unadmitted facts, the principal difference between Christian critics and non-Christian critics is as to the miracles, and especially as to the great miracle of the Resurrection of Christ. Some anti-Christian



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critics say that miracles *cannot* be true, and are not provable by the amount or kind of evidence which might be sufficient in the case of facts or alleged facts not miraculous ; and it is averred that the evidence offered for the Christian view does not amount to demonstration. I shall state hereafter some of the grounds on which Christian writers support their view of these anti-Christian propositions.

It will be convenient to give you, *first*, the testimony of modern sceptics (or Agnostics, or unbelievers) of eminence as regards the facts of Christianity in the early centuries, and as regards the genius of its Founder, as these matters have appeared to candid inquirers who yet do not believe in anything supernatural.

Later on I shall give you the testimony of heathens and Jews of the first and second centuries.

After knowing all these testimonies you will see what remains really in dispute.

### WHAT OPPONENTS ADMIT.

On the first point, I shall give you at the start, as a fair summary of facts, two or three

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sentences from the article "Jesus Christ" in the last edition of that great work, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*: "From the scanty notices of heathens even, we can derive a confirmation of the main external facts in the life of Christ, His miracles, His parables, His crucifixion, and His claim to Divine honor; the devotion, the innocence, the heroic constancy and mutual affection of His followers, and the progressive victories won by His religion in spite of overwhelming opposition, alike physical and intellectual. . . . It is remarkable that from intensely embittered Jewish sources we derive an absolute confirmation of—His having performed miracles—of His crucifixion—and even of His innocence—for not a single crime but that of working miracles by magic, and claiming Divine honor, is even in these sources laid to His charge." And again: "Even the most advanced sceptic cannot deny that by His life and teaching He has altered the entire current of human history, and has raised the standard of human morality."

I shall give you some illustrations of these statements from the published testimony of modern sceptics and unbelievers of eminence;

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and afterwards shall say something of the testimony of heathens and Jews.

The great *Napoleon* was a sceptic, if not worse, as was nearly all France in his time. In his place of banishment from Europe, speaking about Christ to one of his attendants, he is reported to have made these observations: "Between Him and whoever else in the world there is no possible term of comparison. I know men, and Jesus Christ is not a man. . . . There is between Christ and all other religions whatsoever the distance of infinity; from the first day to the last He is the same, always the same, majestic and simple, infinitely firm and infinitely gentle."

*Rousseau*, an infidel of the French revolution in the eighteenth century, said, through a fictitious character believed to have been expressing the author's own sentiments: "If the life and death of Socrates are those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God;" words not, of course, implying that *Rousseau* believed Jesus to be God in the Christian sense.

*M. Renan*, a distinguished French infidel writer, recently deceased, whose books have

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been translated into English and other languages, and have been largely circulated in Europe and America, said these things of our Lord : "Jesus is unique in everything. Nothing can be compared to him. . . . He is the incomparable man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of the Son of God. . . . The evangelical Christ is the most beautiful incarnation of God in the most beautiful of forms—which is moral man—God in man. . . . His beauty is eternal ; His reign will have no end." Jesus is "the individual who has made the species take the greatest step toward the Divine."

*Strauss*, the great German sceptic (also now deceased), spoke of Jesus as the highest object we can possibly imagine with respect to religion, the being without whose presence in the mind perfect piety is impossible. Again, he said : "In all those natures which were only purified by struggles and violent disruptions (think only of a Paul, an Augustine, a Luther), the shadowy color of this remains forever, and something hard and gloomy clings to them all their lives ; but of this in Jesus no trace is found."

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*Professor Huxley*, the great scientist and agnostic (lately deceased), in a description of what he called the "bright side of Christianity," spoke of Jesus as "that ideal of manhood—with its strength and patience, its justice, and its pity for human frailty ; its helpfulness, to the extreme of self-sacrifice ; its ethical purity and nobility—which Apostles have pictured, in which armies of martyrs have placed their unshakable faith, and whence obscure men and women have derived the courage to rebuke Popes and Kings."\*

*Mr. Lecky*, the well-known rational historian, rejects the superhuman part of Christianity, and gives, notwithstanding, this account of our Lord : "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love ; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions ; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the

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\* See article in *Nineteenth Century*, reprinted in *Popular Science Monthly*, Vol. 34, p. 772, November, 1888, to May, 1889.

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strongest incentive to its practice ; and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said, the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

Again, the late *John Stuart Mill*, the author of most learned and able works on logic, political economy and other subjects, was one of the most astute of modern unbelievers in supernatural Christianity ; yet, in his "Essays on Religion," published after his death, he speaks of "the beauty, and benignity, and moral greatness which so eminently distinguished the sayings and character of Christ." Again, he speaks of "the most valuable part of the effect on character which Christianity has produced" as being its "holding up in a divine person a standard of excellence and a model for imitation" ; that this "can never more be lost to humanity" ; that "it is the God incarnate" who "has taken so great and salutary a hold on modern minds." Again, "Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left, a unique figure, not more unlike his precursors



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than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching. . . . About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which . . . must place the Prophet of Nazareth—even in the belief of those who have no belief in his inspiration—in the very first rank of men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast.” The learned writer goes on to say that in Christ “pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth”; and he adds, that it “would not be easy for an unbeliever to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life.”

One more quotation to the same effect will be my last here. This is from another author, whose work, entitled “Supernatural Religion,” is one of the fullest, most elaborate and learned works of English authorship which have yet appeared against Christianity as a revealed and supernatural religion :

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“The teaching of Jesus carried morality to the sublimest point attained, or even attainable, by humanity. The influence of his spiritual religion has been rendered doubly great by the unparalleled purity and elevation of his own character. Surpassing in his sublime simplicity and earnestness the moral grandeur of Sakya Mouni (Buddha), and putting to the blush the somewhat sullied, though generally admirable, teaching of Socrates and Plato, and the whole round of Greek philosophers, he presented the rare spectacle of a life, so far as we can estimate it, uniformly noble and consistent with his lofty principles ; so that the ‘imitation of Christ’ has become almost the final word in the preaching of his religion, and must continue to be one of the most powerful elements of its performance. His system might not be new, but it was in a high sense the perfect development of natural morality ; and it was final in this respect among others, that, superseding codes of law and elaborate rules of life, it confined itself to two fundamental principles : love to God and love to man. Whilst all previous systems had merely sought to purify the stream, it demanded the

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purification of the fountain. It placed the evil thought on a par with the evil action. Such morality, based upon the intelligent and earnest acceptance of divine law and perfect recognition of the brotherhood of man, is the highest conceivable by humanity; and, although its power and influence must augment with the increase of enlightenment, it is itself beyond development, consisting as it does of principles unlimited in their range, and inexhaustible in their application."

It is of our Jesus, and of the Religion which He founded, that all these things are said by men who, on critical grounds or because they disbelieve all miracles, do not accept Christianity as a revealed supernatural religion. It would not be easy for Christian writers, speaking from the human standpoint, to find stronger things to say for the Saviour they love than have been said by the eminent men whose language I have quoted.

### WHAT OTHER LEADING FACTS ADMITTED.

Call to mind here some of the leading facts which, in view of what distinguished unbelievers

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have thus said or admitted, as well as on other grounds, may now be assumed as beyond reasonable controversy, and whether Jesus was a superhuman person or not. These admitted facts have an important bearing on the question of His having had a Divine mission.

Jesus was certainly an historical person of the period alleged. He was a Jew. His mother and Joseph, his reputed father, were Jews. Joseph was a carpenter, in humble circumstances; Jesus was born in a stable, and a manger was his cradle. His education was such as was open to the class to which he belonged, and his recorded words do not show any other human learning. He worked at the trade of a carpenter until about thirty years of age, when he entered on his public ministry. From that time he had no home of his own; as he himself said, the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, but he had not where to lay his head. His ministry lasted for three years, during which time he went about preaching and teaching his Gospel, and healing, somehow, all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. Our Scripture record declares that

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from time to time “they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and he healed them.”

### LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST.

Further, this young Jew was confessedly an extraordinary and wonderful man, so far as he was a man; he was wonderful for his intellectual gifts; he was a man of ‘profound insight,’ of ‘pre-eminent’ and ‘sublime genius.’ He was wonderful also, according to the same admissions, for the lofty moral and religious standard which he inculcated, and which he exemplified in his own life—a standard far in advance of the orthodox and popular teachings of his day. He was, as one or other of the same men has said, the highest possible ‘ideal of manhood’; always ‘majestic and simple; infinitely firm and infinitely gentle’; unsurpassed in ‘his sublime simplicity and earnestness’; a man of ‘unparalleled purity and elevation of character’; whose ‘life was uniformly noble and consistent with his lofty principles’; the

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grandest of all known men of the human race in all time ; 'the greatest moral reformer who ever existed on earth' ; 'the individual who has made the species take the greatest step towards the divine' ; a man 'between whom and any one else in the world there is no possible term of comparison' ; 'that he was unique in everything' ; that 'nothing can be compared to him.' In brief, that he was 'the most beautiful incarnation of God, in the most beautiful of forms' ; that his 'life and death were those of a God.' Such are some of the very expressions of some of the most distinguished adversaries of Christianity as a Supernatural Religion.

It is further admitted by adversaries of Christianity to be reasonably certain, that during the three years of his public life Jesus was a doer of wonders of some kind ; if not miracles, seeming miracles ; and that these wonders or miracles had considerable prominence in his life. Even such an unbeliever in the superhuman as Renan allowed this, and spoke of Jesus as a thaumaturgist or wonderworker.

The man of whom such were the leading characteristics, as practically admitted by repre-

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sentative unbelievers and as depicted in the Gospels, may be described further as beyond doubt one who loved all good supremely and intensely ; loved God the Father supremely and intensely ; and was intensely anxious that all should love God as he himself did ; and should love all men ; that all should love all good as he did ; and that all should in their several places consecrate themselves to the loving service of God and the well-being of one another. While Jesus loved all men, the poor amongst them were objects of his special sympathy ; as were the lame, the blind, the paralytic, and all sufferers, of whatever kind their sufferings.

## THE LORD'S PERSONAL TEACHINGS.

Again, it is not disputed that the leading purpose in Christ's earthly life, or in that portion of it of which we have a record, was to instruct men as to the will of God and the way to Heaven ; to make men to be in this life good and just and merciful ; beneficent and loving to one another in all the relations of life ; and reverent, loving and obedient toward the



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Almighty God, whom he represented to be a holy God of infinite mercy and loving kindness.

It is recorded also in the Gospels that in all his teachings he spoke as having authority, "and not as the Scribes"; that he taught as if, better than Scribes or any others, he knew what the will of God was, knew the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, and knew the truth on every subject to be what he taught. He recognized the sacred writings of his nation as having just authority; and, according to the Christian records, he announced that he had not come to destroy the teachings of the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them as he interpreted them. But he insisted that the law for men as intended by the sacred writings had in important respects been made void by traditions to which ecclesiastical authority and popular belief wrongly ascribed an authority equal or superior to that of Scripture. The lowly young carpenter denied to the traditions any authority whatever. He himself taught a still higher morality than Moses had taught, or was interpreted in that day as having taught; and he insisted with

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emphasis that this higher morality was needed in order to obtain the favor of the loving God and the blessings of the life to come.

He emphasized the Old Testament teaching which declared that God was a God to be loved by those who knew Him, and to be so loved with all the heart and soul and mind and strength. He spoke of Him lovingly as Father, as his Father, and as the Father of those he addressed: "your Father." He spoke of Him as a God who loves men, all men, and not good men only. He pointed out that God causes the rain to fall on the evil and the good, on the just and the unjust. So on the very day of Christ's trial Peter denied his Master with cursing, and yet, repenting, he was loved and honored to the end of life. Paul in his early life had persecuted Christians, and yet, becoming a Christian, he was loved and honored to the end by the Father and the Son. The heart of the thief on the cross had not turned to Christ until perhaps the last day of his life, but, according to St. Luke's Gospel, he then received the assurance that that night he would be with Christ in Paradise.

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### CHRISTIAN DUTIES.

Further, Jesus taught men to live for the life to come, which is eternal, instead of living exclusively or chiefly for the life which is now, and which, with all its attractions, is short and fleeting. "Lay not up for yourselves," he said, "treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through or steal." But it clearly enough appears he did not mean that we should neglect earthly things; quite the contrary. Every doctrine in relation to the future life he used to promote virtue and goodness in the life which is now.

He taught the duty of, in all respects, doing God's will. He taught that it was the doer of God's will who would enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and that every doer of the Father's will was (touching assurance) Christ's own brother and sister and mother. The rules he gave as being the will of God for human conduct were such as these: All things whatsoever ye would

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that men should do to you, even so do ye also unto them. Love not only those who love you, but love also your enemies, do good even to them that hate you, bless them that curse you. He taught that we are to fulfil all our duties as unto God, and that all good done to men is accepted by God, and rewarded by Him, as if done to God himself. He taught further that the principle of duty lies in the heart, and that duty does not consist in merely outward conduct ; that the heart is to be for God and goodness ; and that where the heart is far from Him, worship is in vain. Evil thoughts and desires are to be put away ; evil thoughts beget evil deeds.

He further taught that without this goodness soundness of faith was not sufficient, nor were even the possession and exercise of supernatural gifts. "By their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by Thy name" [as the revised version has it], "and by Thy name

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cast out devils, and by Thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

In an account which He gave of the Day of Judgment, the characteristics which distinguish the two classes of mankind He declared to be, that persons of the one class were kind "to these my brethren," and the other had shown no such kindness. Giving "to one of these my brethren" meat when he was hungry, drink when he was thirsty, hospitality when he was a stranger, clothing when he was naked, or visiting him when he was in prison—every such kindness was the same, he said, as if rendered to the Judge, even to Christ himself; "Inasmuch as you did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it to me." Or, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." To the former class would be given eternal life, and for the latter there was to be condign punishment.

Such, as you know, were some of His teachings as set forth in the Gospels. The effect of these teachings on Christians was wonderful to

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non-Christians, and called forth from them at an early period the testimony, "How these Christians love one another!"

If evil has sometimes been done, or is sometimes done still, in the name of Christianity, this has plainly been in spite of the teachings and example and spirit of the Master. The devil sows his tares among the wheat; but the fields would be all tares if Christ had sown no wheat. Some infidel writers dwell on the evil which was done in ages past, and is done at the present day by professed believers, in spite of the Master's teachings, example and spirit, as if the evil were the proper fruit of the holy teachings and example—an argument which is absurd and ought to deceive no one.

### COMMON TO ALL CHURCHES.

These teachings of our Lord, and other important facts and doctrines of Christianity, are recognized by all Protestants, and by all others professing in any manner the Christian name, including the churches between which and our own the differences in other respects are very great, as in the case of the Church of Rome and

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the Greek Church. The extent to which Protestants, Roman Catholics, and others agree was thus stated at an Equal Rights meeting (1st September, 1890), by so strong a Protestant as a former Reverend President of the so-called Equal Rights Association, than whom no minister of any church is held in higher honor by the Protestants of Canada: "There is a great deal of Christian truth held in common by Protestants and Roman Catholics. Do not both Protestants and Roman Catholics believe in the moral law? and in saying that the Saviour became incarnate, and died for us? and in the Holy Spirit our Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comforter? and in a future state of rewards and punishments? The whole range of life, and the dogmas which rule life, are common to the whole Christian world."

### THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

Thus the Christian Ideal of character and conduct, as Christ set it up, and as He himself in His own life illustrated it, is, happily, the Ideal, to a large extent, of all who call themselves Christians.



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There are important differences between the churches ; some of the differences being in some sense fundamental, and some differences being not very serious. So, within a church some earnest members may not heartily maintain all its dogmas, or concur in all its rules, or conform to all its customs. In secular matters, outside churches, there are like differences of opinion and practice among earnest men. Differences of many kinds may continue, but, notwithstanding them all, what a world this would be if the Christian Ideal of character and conduct should be generally realized ; what a world it will be when the Ideal is realized, as Christians believe that one day it will be. Think what such a result means. All men lovers of God and of Christ His Son. All men loving one another, as parents love, as brothers love, as sisters love ; all men, notwithstanding diversity of condition, or culture, or color, or nationality, or race. No wars ; no national wrongs ; no hostile armies, and no occasion for them. All men just and true in politics, in business, and in all the relations of life. In politics no bribing or misleading of voters ; no false charges against govern-

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ments or oppositions ; no room for true charges. No lying with type or tongue ; everyone speaking the truth, even when it is to his hurt. No unfaithfulness in public trusts or in private trusts. Rich men rich in good works. No grinding of the poor ; no jealousy of the wealthy. Employers just and considerate to the employed ; the employed faithful to their employers ; a fair day's work receiving everywhere a fair day's wage. No strikes, and no occasion for them. No false weights and no false measures. No bad wares, and no bad work. No hard creditors, and no dishonest debtors. No crime ; no vice. No over-reaching ; no cheating, in a horse trade or any other trade. No one seeking an unjust advantage of any kind over another, any more than he would over his father or his mother, or his brother, or his sister, or his child. All husbands loving their wives ; all wives loving their husbands ; all children dutiful and affectionate to their parents. All men and women kind, charitable and courteous toward all other men and all other women. Duty the supreme affection and supreme aim of everyone.

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Such a state of things is the Ideal of Christianity, and, so far as it prevails, is the Kingdom of God among men ; the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth ; and, according to the doctrine of Christianity, there is a still higher Heaven hereafter, where there is the ever Visible Presence of the Father and the Son. Immense progress has been made towards the Christian Ideal since Jesus died on the cross ; the nineteenth century was far in advance of the first century, and in advance of every century since the first. The goal unhappily is far from being reached yet ; the world still abounds in selfishness, and cruelty, and all manner of wickedness ; but Christian churches, Christian Societies, and Christian men and women, are working in all lands for the Divine cause, heartily and hopefully, never more so, and continued progress is being made towards the glorious goal. Greater progress has not been made in any century in the world's history than in the nineteenth.

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### THE END OF CHRIST'S LIFE AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

Let me state now a few more of the historical facts which are not matters of controversy :

The teachings of Jesus, His exposure of the falseness and hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, the works He did, and especially His claim to Divine authority, excited enmity and persecution on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities of His nation and others. During the greater part of His ministry He was attended from place to place by twelve of His early converts ; and these during His ministry saw what He did, heard what He taught, received from Him special instructions, and assisted Him in His work of love. All of them belonged to His own apparent class. After a ministry of three years He was betrayed by one of these twelve, at the instance of the ecclesiastical authorities whom His teaching had offended ; and, through their influence with the Roman Governor of Judea, He was arrested, and was on the same day condemned and put to death, and to one of the most agonizing of slow deaths—death by crucifixion. It is certain, further, that His

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apostles and other disciples believed that, after being dead, He came to life again ; and it is clear that their faith in this was intense. Of this I am to say more hereafter.

All that I have so far related respecting the life and teachings and death of Christ we may safely take as strictly historical facts, and as so clear and certain that they are in substance and effect admitted by candid critics who, notwithstanding, do not admit the supernatural element in Christianity.

### THE SECOND PART OF THE LECTURE—JESUS A DIVINE PERSON.

I come now to the second part of my subject, and shall mention some of the proofs of material facts not so admitted, and some of the other reasons there are for believing that this exceptional man Christ Jesus was not a mere man, however great and good, but was more, was a Divine Person, a Messenger to us from the other world, and from the Supreme God there.

### CHRIST'S OWN CLAIMS.

One strong evidence of this is that Jesus himself believed and averred His Divine authority

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and mission, and averred it with no earthly object to gain thereby, but the reverse. This pure and spotless One, this wise and sober-minded Teacher, believed and averred that He was The Christ, and moreover, that He was in a peculiar and special sense the Son of God.

That much as to what He claimed is matter of admitted history. According to the Gospels, He claimed also to be greater than the prophet Jonah; greater than Solomon, the wise and great King of Israel; greater than the temple, which was the sacred object of His nation's affection, reverence and pride. He claimed to have power to forgive sins, which no prophet or priest had ever before claimed to have. He claimed authority to interpret, and to even abrogate or declare abrogated what had been said "by them of old time: 'Ye have heard that it hath been said. . . . But I say unto you,'" etc. So He claimed that all power had been given to Him in heaven and on earth: that all things had been delivered to Him by the Father; that no man (perfectly) knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth anyone the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son reveals

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Him. He said that He was to be the Judge of all men at the last day ; that He was to come for this purpose in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory ; and that it was He who would have the determination of the rewards and punishments due to men for their good or evil deeds.

These claims of our Lord are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke ; and there is no reason to disbelieve from any standpoint that the claims were made as so recorded. For the present I confine myself to these three Gospels, because many unbelieving writers and some others allow to them a reliability which they do not allow to John's Gospel. But the expressions I have quoted from them show that according to the three earlier Gospels, as well as according to John, Jesus claimed to be a superhuman person, and to have superhuman power. This accords also with all that we learn from other sources, Christian and non-Christian.

### HIS CLAIMS WORTHY OF CREDIT.

Now that Jesus himself believed all that He averred respecting himself, I do not see how any



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intelligent inquirer can justify doubting ; few learned critics nowadays do doubt it, whatever explanation they may suggest of Jesus having so believed. His perfect purity, as profoundly felt by all Christians, and as acknowledged by eminent non-Christians, make this belief of our Lord himself to constitute the highest possible guarantee of the honesty of his claims.

Consider the surrounding circumstances. His claims were most distasteful to his countrymen, and to the ecclesiastical authorities of the nation ; and, of all his claims, the claim that he was the Son of God, in the sense in which he knew his judges understood the claim, was to them and to all orthodox Jews his greatest offence ; the chief priests pronounced the claim to be blasphemy ; and it was for this claim that they condemned him to be “worthy of death.” So it is said that in the Jewish Talmud there are tracts filled with blasphemies against Jesus, and yet that, amongst all the evil things said, there is no charge against him of any sin save his claim to be “the Son of God.” John Stuart

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Mill, sceptic as he was, admitted (I give you his own words) "a possibility that Christ was actually what he supposed himself to be, . . . a man charged with a special, express and unique commission from God." Jesus demonstrated his belief in the claims which he made, both by making them and by submitting to an agonising death in confirmation of them. On the other hand, illusion on his part as to his own personality seems obviously out of the question.

Do we need more evidence than the practically undisputed facts supply, if we had no more, to justify our acceptance of the claims made by this wonderfully pure and sober-minded teacher? this most loving, most self-sacrificing, most wise and wonderful of men, so far as man he was? If we cannot accept the testimony of such a one as he is admitted to have been—testimony given under the circumstances described—whose or what testimony can we ever accept in regard to a matter of which we can have no personal knowledge?

But there is much more evidence of the superhuman character of Jesus than His own trustworthy affirmation.

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Another great proof, and the greatest possible, is the

### MIRACLE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Did he rise from the dead after his crucifixion? It is quite certain that his followers believed within a few days after his death that he had risen; and this belief in his Resurrection became from this time, and was always afterwards, the cardinal doctrine of Christianity. Let me mention some of the considerations which show this.

Nearly all the educated unbelievers of Europe who have studied the question seem to fully admit the genuineness and authority of four of the New Testament epistles which bear the name of Paul, even when the others are disputed. These four are the epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Corinthians; all of which were written about the year 57 or 58, or about thirty years only after the death of Jesus. Now, these four epistles contain enough, without any help from the other New Testament writings, to demonstrate that the miracle of the Resurrection had then the leading place in the Christian

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faith, was an essential part of it, was put forward as an essential matter of evidence and as a fact of the greatest moment otherwise. On this point let me remind you of what is said in one of these undisputed writings of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the First Epistle to the Corinthians : “ I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures ” (that is, according to the prophecies in the Old Testament Scriptures); “ and that he was seen of Cephas (Peter); then of the twelve; after that he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. . . . If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. . . . If

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Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

All the writings collected in the New Testament affirm the same fact or supposed fact; and every other source of information concurs in showing that the resurrection of Jesus was from the first the universal belief of Christians, and was beyond all doubt the great and inspiring doctrine on the faith of which the Apostles and early disciples devoted their lives to the propagation of Christ's teachings, and willingly endured the greatest privations and sufferings, and often a terribly painful death, to which the avowal of their belief subjected them.

Some of these believers had themselves seen Jesus after his resurrection, or believed that they had seen him. Others who had like faith in the Lord's resurrection had not themselves seen him after he rose, but were more or less intimate with those who testified to having seen him, and whose testimony they believed. Among those who thus believed were some

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men of culture and large intellect, such as Stephen and Apollos and Luke.

More is known of Paul than of any other of the Apostles or early Christians. His four acknowledged writings alone are sufficient to show him to have been a man of lofty intellect. He is allowed to have also possessed all the culture of his nation and age. Before he became a Christian he had been a man of great piety, as piety was then understood among Jews of the strictest sort. He was a contemporary of Jesus, though he had not seen the Lord before the Lord's resurrection and ascension. Paul had access to all that could be said against Christianity, or against the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, if anything in those days could be said. He had also been deeply prejudiced against the new religion, and in favor of the Jewish, in which he had been educated, as it was taught and held by the priests and Pharisees. In consequence of his Jewish belief he was at first an active persecutor of Christians. Afterwards he became a convert to Christianity, a believer in Jesus, in his teachings, his Divine authority, his

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resurrection and his holy and loving character ; and he became such a believer in the deepest sense. His writings, as well as all our other information, show that after his conversion, and for the remainder of his life, he was an enthusiastic lover of the crucified One, an enthusiastic promulgator of his doctrines, an untiring teacher of the Gospel of love—love to God, love to Christ, and love to men. To this work he devoted himself with joy and boundless zeal for the remaining thirty years of his life, and therein gladly endured the loss of all earthly good, bore unspeakable suffering, and finally died a martyr's death. It is impossible under these circumstances to doubt Paul's honesty ; and it is difficult to see how such a man could be deceived as to the essential facts on which was based the religion to which he had been converted, and to which with so perfect a faith he devoted himself, sacrificing for its sake all earthly advantages and comforts. He was so sure of the fact of Christ's resurrection, and so sure of Christ's teachings, that he regarded nothing else to be worth a thought. He thus summarized some of his labors up to the time of his



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writing, in answering those who had disputed some of his teachings: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck; a day and a night have I been in the deep; in journeyings often; in perils of rivers; in perils of robbers; in perils from my countrymen; in perils from the Gentiles; in perils in the city; in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail; in watchings often; in hunger and thirst; in fastings often; in cold and nakedness." (2 Cor. 11: 23-27.)

In like manner the apostles of the Lord who had personal knowledge of the resurrection and of other marks of Divine authority which Jesus displayed, abandoned every earthly object, endured many severe sufferings, and most of them a martyr's death.

Other early Christians, who were not themselves personal acquaintances of Jesus, believed

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with equal faith, and showed the strength of their faith by the same demonstrative evidence. Among these also were some men of great intelligence, ability and culture.

It is thus a perfectly certain historical truth that the Great Miracle of the Resurrection of Christ was believed by many contemporaries of our Lord who had the best means of knowing or ascertaining the truth ; that they believed, and avowed their belief, against every earthly motive for not believing or avowing their belief ; and that the Great Miracle was believed also by increasing numbers in the generations which followed.

If Jesus really rose from the dead, as was thus believed, nothing more can be needed to demand the acceptance of what He taught ; and the only remaining question for us all must be, What did He teach ?

### THE OTHER NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES.

But the resurrection of Christ, though the greatest, was not the only Christian miracle. Many miracles are claimed to have been performed by Jesus and his disciples in his life-

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time, and by his apostles afterwards. These miracles are of great variety, and most of them, according to our records, were performed publicly and in the presence of foes as well as friends ; and most of them were not manifestations of power merely, but were manifestations of benevolence and of sympathy with human suffering as well. Their chief evidential value now is the support which they give to the crowning miracle of the resurrection of our Lord. Rational belief in these other miracles prevents any rational difficulty in believing also our Lord's resurrection from the dead, assuming that there is sufficient proof of such other miracles.

^ The fact that, both during our Lord's life and afterwards, he was *believed* both by friends and foes to have performed miracles or wonders of some like kind, is not doubtful, the fact being not only so recorded in the Gospels, but stated also in all other narratives of his life which appeared in the first and second centuries, and of which we have any information.

The Gospels give the fullest account of these miracles, and, besides recording miracles by our

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Lord himself, they represent him as having given power to his apostles to work miracles. This is the gospel record as to what he said to his disciples when he sent them forth in his lifetime to preach what they had heard from him: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils."

In connection with the preaching of the apostles after Christ's death, there is the following information in our Scriptures: "God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost." "Many signs and wonders were done by the apostles"; "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people."\*

What I say here in regard to these statements of supernatural incidents is, that it is not supposable that such statements would have been thus made if when made it was not generally believed amongst Christians that miracles were then being performed, and had before been

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\* Matt. 10: 8; Mark 16: 17, 18 (See "Gould's International Critical Commentary on Mark," p. 301 to end); Heb. 2: 4; Acts 4: 30; *ib.* 5: 12.

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performed, agreeably to these statements. The fact that it was so is further shown by Paul's admitted Epistles, if we can rely on our translations, either the authorized or the revised; the fact, I mean, that miracles, or what seemed miracles and were believed to be miracles, were then well-known incidents of Christian life. Thus, we have in the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 12, these references to them: "To another (are given) the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles. . . . God hath set forth in the Church—first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles, then the gifts of healing," etc. Again speaking of himself, there are these statements in the admitted epistles of the same apostle: "For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost." (R. V.) "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you, in all weakness, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." "He therefore that ministereth to you the spirit

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and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law," etc.\*

The unbelieving but learned author of "Supernatural Religion," while he disputes the meaning of the word "miracle" in regard to these verses, says, "It must not be supposed that we in the slightest degree question the fact that the Apostle Paul believed in the reality of supernatural intervention in mundane affairs, or question that he asserted the actual occurrence of certain miracles." "Nobody impeaches Paul's good sense or honesty."

With respect to the miracles, both of Christ himself and his apostles and disciples, there was this only known difference between Christians and non-Christians in the early centuries: Christians ascribed the wonders or miracles to the power of God; opponents ascribed them to magic, enchantment, satanic influence and the like. This consideration adds strength to the argument that the miracles alleged were actually performed.

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\* 1 Cor. 12: 9, 10, 11, 12, 28; Rom. 15: 18, 19; Gal. 3: 5.

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### HEATHEN TESTIMONY.

Suetonius, a heathen historian of the first century, described Christians as a "sort of men addicted to a new and *magical* superstition." Critias, a subsequent heathen author of early date, styled the Christians "*magical* or conjuring men." Origen reports of Phlegon, an opponent of Christianity who wrote in the early part of the second century, that "in the thirteenth or fourteenth book of his chronicles he ascribed to Christ the foreknowledge of some future events . . . and testified that the things spoken of happened according to what he had declared." Celsus was an opponent of Christianity in the second century, and one of the ablest opponents Christianity has had. He spoke of Christians as a "society of *magicians*," spoke of Christ as having acquired His power from the Egyptians, and as having on account of them proclaimed himself a God. The summary which Celsus gave of Christ's miracles shows that they were those which the Gospel describes ; for according to him they were of "cures, resurrections of the dead, or a few loaves feeding a multitude of people, many



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fragments being left." These wonders Celsus, like other anti-Christians of the early centuries, ascribed to magic and to conjurings; and he classed the Christian miracles with the works of magicians who, he said, professed things more wonderful than those of Christ. Heathen writers of subsequent date spoke of the Christian miracles in the same way.

### THE JEWISH ADMISSIONS

are to the same effect. Here are some of them: In one of the tracts of the Jewish Talmud, a tract called Sanhedrim, Jesus is said to have "wrought *magic*, seduced, and caused Israel to err." And again, it is alleged that Jesus was executed "because He dealt in *sorceries* and seduced and instigated Israel." In the tract called Schabbath there is this passage referring to Jesus: "Did not the son of Stada bring *enchantments* out of Egypt in an incision which was in his flesh, . . . for he could not have brought them out written in a book, because the magicians examined all who departed, lest they should carry out enchantments to teach them to other nations." So in other

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anti-Christian Jewish writings of the early centuries.

On the other hand, I do not find that any Jewish or heathen authors in the early centuries after Christ took a view as to His miracles differing from the views expressed in these extracts.

The world having outgrown these early theories of unbelievers, we are left with no other explanation of the miracles from those centuries than the Christian explanation—the superhuman power of the miracle workers. No man could have done the things which they did unless God had been with him.

## CREDIBILITY OF THE MIRACLES.

Some nowadays endeavor to account for the miracles by suggesting the theory that, Christ having been an extraordinary man, and having done some extraordinary things not miraculous, miraculous acts came to be ascribed to Him after His death, and He came to be adored as Divine. It is suggested in support of this theory, that Christ and the workers of miracles in His name possessed a special

magnetic power, and that their laying hands on the sick and healing them was the same sort of thing as is now done by mesmerists, hypnotists, and the like. But there is no historical foundation for this theory ; and many of the miracles would not be accounted for by it—such as the feeding of the multitudes, quieting the storm, raising the dead ; and cures effected without the sufferer's presence, as in the case of the centurion's absent servant, and of the Syrophœnician woman's absent daughter. If in his seeming miracles Christ merely availed himself of natural laws which were unknown to others, how had he learned them ?

The incredibility of all miracles, however established, was asserted by David Hume, and is still asserted by some learned unbelievers, but not by all. Hume's argument was not concurred in by, for example, Mills or Huxley ; and satisfactory answers have been made to it by Christian critics. The mass of mankind, and of learned and cultured men, as well as others, have never felt the incredibility. Certainly, if we had been eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of what is recorded in the Gospels ; if we had ourselves seen

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Christ and his disciples performing from time to time the miracles which they are said to have frequently wrought ; and, above all, if we had personal knowledge that Christ rose from the dead, and was seen by His apostles and disciples from time to time for forty days after His resurrection ; that during this period He ate in their presence, conversed with them, gave them instructions as to their conduct in the future ; and that in the end He was seen ascending into the heavens ; if we had ourselves been eye and ear-witnesses to all this, our mental constitution would not permit any of us to doubt the super-human character of Christ. We were not such eye-witnesses or ear-witnesses ; nor were we so of a multitude of other facts, both of past history and of contemporary occurrence, which facts, nevertheless, Christians and non-Christians alike believe, and justly and necessarily believe.

Further : It is to be remembered that the occasion for the Christian miracles (including the resurrection of Christ) affords an adequate reason for them. Miracles are necessarily unusual and exceptional ; but if we believe in a God of Providence and Power, miracles with an

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adequate purpose do not stand on the same footing as any others, but are as natural and fitting as other facts, and are to be accepted on like proper proofs. The principal purpose of the Christian miracles, in connection with the Life and Mission of Christ, was the grand one of the Redemption of the human race, a purpose which to human reason appears as important as Creation itself. No man has a right to consider such miracles by the Great Creator as incredible.

The great Niebuhr, described as the founder of the acutest and most independent school of historical criticism, has pointed out the totally different spirit to be found in the Gospel miracles as compared with the legends and pseudo-miracles of other religions; and he has elsewhere made this statement: "The man who does not hold Christ's earthly life, with all its miracles, to be as properly and really historical as any event in the sphere of history, I do not consider to be a Protestant Christian." This refers to certain critics, who called themselves Protestant Christians, and yet argued that the Gospel story and its miracles consist of a series of myths and legends.

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### RELIABILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT NARRATIVES.

So far I have endeavored to assume for the purpose of my investigation nothing material in regard to the Gospels or other New Testament writings beyond what eminent non-Christian critics have admitted in regard to them, such critics denying only the supernatural incidents alleged.

So pronounced a sceptic as Rousseau said that "the Gospel has characteristics of truthfulness so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that its inventor would have been more astonishing than its hero."

In like manner John Stuart Mill said : " It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been super-added by the tradition of His followers. . . . Who among His disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus? or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospel? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee. As certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies

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were of a totally different sort. Still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good that was in them was all derived, as they always professed that it was, from the higher source."

Renan, said to be one of the most learned of unbelievers, has this statement : " It is sufficient for me to say that the more I have reflected, the more I have been led to believe that the four books recognized as canonical bring us very near the age of Christ ; if not in their last revision, yet at least in regard to the documents that compose them." Again, " I admit the four canonical Gospels as serious documents. St. Matthew evidently deserves peculiar confidence for the discourses. Here are the oracles, the very notes taken while the memory of the instruction of Jesus was living and definite. . . . Mark is full of minute observations, proceeding beyond doubt from an eye-witness. There is nothing to conflict with the supposition that this eye-witness, who had evidently followed Jesus, who had loved Him and watched Him in close intimacy, and who had preserved a vivid image of Him, was the Apostle Peter himself, as Papias



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has it. . . . As to Luke, doubt is scarcely possible. . . . The author is certainly the same as the author of the Acts of the Apostles. . . . It is extremely probable that Luke was a disciple of Paul."

Strauss has this statement: "The review of evidence with regard to the first three Gospels gives this result, that soon after the beginning of the second century (that is the time he names) certain traces are found of their existence, not indeed (he alleges) in their present form, but still of the presence of a considerable portion of their contents, and with every indication that the source of these contents is derived from the country which was the theatre of the events in question."

Other quotations to the same effect might be added from other critics holding the same position as these towards Christianity. What in the Christian evidences such men are satisfied of, and so satisfied as to publish their satisfaction, all ordinary inquirers may be satisfied of too. Such testimony by anti-Christians is like the favorable testimony of unwilling and unfriendly witnesses before a court.

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The observations which I have just quoted from the writings of unbelievers of note were not intended to apply to the Resurrection or other miracles as recorded in the New Testament writings, or to the details there given of the miracles. These details, if correct, are important as showing that neither the Resurrection nor the other miracles can reasonably be explained away. It is from the New Testament writing alone that we obtain direct evidence of such details.

As to the Resurrection, for example, it is from the Gospels and Acts we learn that Jesus after His resurrection was not only seen by the witnesses named, but repeatedly ate with His disciples ; that when His appearance frightened them, and they thought it was, or might be, not Christ whom they saw, but a spirit, He told them (in the voice they knew and loved so well) to handle Him, as (He said) a spirit had not flesh or bones as He had ; and that on repeated occasions He showed them His hands and His feet and His side ; the hands and feet which had been pierced with the nails that cruelly bound Him to the cross, and the side which

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had been pierced with a soldier's spear in order to make sure that He was dead.

So, it is from the New Testament writings we learn that Jesus spoke to the disciples from time to time during forty days after His resurrection ; that He spoke to them concerning the Kingdom of God ; now reproving them for the weakness of their faith ; now giving them encouragement, and now instruction ; showing them from Scriptures which they received as divine that the Christ should suffer as He (Jesus) had suffered, and directing repentance and remission of sins to be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem ; and that He further prepared them, by the promise of miraculous gifts and otherwise, for the work of preaching the Gospel to all the world, and making disciples of all nations.

These and other details could be no illusion, even if mere appearances of Christ, without words spoken or bodily acts done, might be illusions. Why are not these details to be believed ? If the other parts of the Gospel narratives are found or admitted to be at least substantially accurate, why are not the super-

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natural parts also to be taken to be correct? Let us consider this point a little further.

It is admitted that the Gospels in their present form, including what they narrate as to the Resurrection and other miracles, were in use as early, at all events, as the latter half of the second century, say, by the year 180, and that these Gospels had then a sacred authority among Christians and Christian societies generally; but the writers referred to believe that the Gospels were not in the same form as now, and did not contain the miracles. Christian critics hold the Gospels to have been originally in the same form as now, and to have contained the same account of the miracles; and they hold the three earliest Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, to have been written and in use several years before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 69 or 70. Opponents admit that they were in existence about that time in some form, but do not admit that they were the same then as now. I have already pointed out that the fact of the Resurrection was asserted and believed from the very first; and I have mentioned some of the reasons why all the miracles

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recorded in the New Testament are to be believed.

In connection with what non-Christian critics acknowledge and admit in regard to the New Testament narratives, note (1) That the narratives which the Gospels and Acts contain of the Resurrection and other miracles fit in naturally with the context, and that the miracles are frequently the occasion of some of the Saviour's most striking and characteristic sayings; and (2) that it is quite certain that the miracle of the Resurrection was believed from the earliest time, and that, while non-Christian critics are satisfied and admit that the miracles with their details were in these narratives as early as the second century, there is on the other hand no evidence that the narratives had ever existed without the miracles; no evidence of the details of the miracles having ever been given differently; no evidence that these details as we have them now were not believed from the first; and no evidence of any counter-tradition in regard to the details by anti-Christians, whether Jewish or Pagan. In connection with this last point it is to be remembered that

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the unbelieving Jews were always more numerous than the Christian Jews, and that there was always the strongest antagonism between them in regard to Christianity. The absence of any counter-tradition regarding either the fact of the miracles or the details of the miracles, is thus of great weight.

In brief, there is so much evidence in favor of the Gospels and Acts as a whole, miracles and all, that no man can reasonably, safely or justifiably, in a matter so momentous, refuse to accept these writings as giving throughout a true statement, or a substantially true statement, of the events recorded, viz., of the life and teachings, the miracles and Resurrection, of the great Founder of Christianity. In the evidences, or in some of the doctrines taught, there may to some minds be difficulties. In rejecting Christianity and its records, we would be rejecting what we cannot disprove, and what therefore *may* be true, and what if true it is of the greatest possible moment that we should accept.

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### THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

A further weighty argument for Christianity is founded on the wonderful progress which the religion made in the first and second centuries, and has continued to make. It has for many centuries been the religion of the civilized world. Nor has it been accepted as a matter of mere form. It has been and is really and truly believed in by the great majority of the people of Christian countries, and of the most gifted men and women as regards intellectual endowment, as well as of those least gifted. Many millions in the last nineteen centuries have earnestly striven to make Christianity as they understood it the guide of their lives; and many other millions have believed it and made no such effort, but have been more or less restrained and otherwise influenced by their belief in it. Thousands and thousands, including persons of all races and classes, have willingly died for their faith in this religion, and I am sure there are now thousands in every part of Christendom who, if called on, would willingly die for its sake.

Christianity is the great power for good in



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the civilized world ; but it had mighty obstacles to overcome, and especially in the early centuries. It was hateful to the great body of the Jews. Outside of Judea, it was despised as coming from a despised nation. It was for other reasons hateful to the great majority of the Gentiles everywhere. Paganism was no restraint on their selfishness or sins. On the contrary, it encouraged all manner of lawlessness and indecency. In Rom. 1 : 24 and following verses St. Paul described some of the practices which prevailed under it. Heathenism had even its gods for assisting the commission of crime and indulgence in vice. A thief had a god to whom he might hopefully pray for success in his thieving enterprises. A man impatient for the death of a relative whose property he expected to inherit, had a god to whom he might pray to expedite the death he desired. Far worse things than even these characterized Roman belief and Roman manners, and characterized the beliefs and manners of other peoples, as well in and before our Saviour's time, as thenceforward until Christianity acquired sway among the nations.

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It is to be remembered that Christianity from the earliest days of its appearance in the world began to introduce its beneficence, its morality, and its spirit. The first recorded organization of Christians was for the better distribution of charity ; and among the first results of the political triumph of Christianity in the Roman Empire, was the promulgation of laws for the protection of children and slaves, and laws regulating in a more Christian spirit the relation of the sexes. The gladiators' shows were abolished wholly through the influence of Christianity, as non-Christian critics admit ; the practice of exposing infants that they might die—a practice in which all classes participated—was abolished ; and a host of other evil customs which paganism and public sentiment sanctioned came to an end. Christianity from the earliest times promoted a purer literature, and a better public spirit, as well as a higher moral life, than had previously existed. Its influence for good was further manifested in the establishment at a very early period of buildings for the reception of strangers, almshouses for the poor, hospitals for the sick, orphan houses for the

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forsaken, and houses of refuge for helpless old women and men. These were new institutions which paganism and pagans in general, however cultured, had known little or nothing of and cared little or nothing for. Benevolent institutions and beneficent acts of every description are the natural and necessary and immediate outcome of the teachings of Jesus.

In a word, it has been said, and, I apprehend, justly said, that of the efforts which in the history of the past have been made for the improvement of mankind and the self-sacrifice which these efforts have evoked, nine-tenths, and perhaps, ninety-nine per cent., have been called forth by Christianity; by the teachings of Jesus, and by regard for Him, His person and His work.

Christianity is a religion of self-denial—a religion which forbids many things to which human nature is inclined, and requires many things to which human nature is disinclined. To most men in every age it is for this reason not an agreeable religion to accept, and unless believed to be true is not likely under ordinary circumstances to be accepted. Besides this, in

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Christ's own time, and for nearly three centuries afterwards, a confession of faith in Him involved earthly sacrifices of every kind, and sufferings, even at times to the death, and the most excruciating and terrible of deaths. It was in spite of all these obstacles and difficulties that the religion of the young Jewish carpenter spread immediately after His death, and with an ever-increasing activity, through every part of the known world; became in less than three centuries after His death the national religion of the Roman Empire, then comprising almost the whole civilized world; and this religion went on spreading, and is now, and for many centuries has been, in some form, the religion of the most civilized and most cultured nations of the world.

Who was the founder of the wonderful religion which accomplished such mighty results against such enormous obstacles and difficulties? Humanly speaking, he was a young Jewish village carpenter, born and brought up in obscure villages of Judea, a conquered province of the Roman Empire, who, at an early age, had been put to death by the Roman Governor under the

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pretence of his being a malefactor. How could such a man create a religion like Christianity, in such a state of the world as then existed? How could such a religion as His, if there was no supernatural element in it, have become, after the founder's death and by the year 313, the religion of the great Roman Empire, then at the height of its civilization and greatness and power? and the religion for all the centuries since of the most civilized and cultured parts of the civilized world? How could such a religious system, thought out by an obscure young Jewish carpenter, taught by his mouth for but three years, and distasteful to the masses and to their governors and priests, become, if there was nothing superhuman about it, the greatest power ever since in influencing the institutions, and laws, and government, and practical life of the nations of the world? If this religion was from God, and attested from the first by due proofs, its progress contains no wonder. But otherwise nothing surely to human reason could be more hopeless than the chance of such a future, nothing more out of the question, when the young carpenter was put to death by order of the

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Roman Governor. If in his lifetime he wrought no miracle, if he did not rise from the dead, if he was a mere man, without superhuman intelligence, power or mission, the progress which his religion made after his death is a greater wonder than the wonders which Christians believe that he wrought by superhuman power.

Did the new religion owe its wonderful propagation, not to Jesus himself, but to its having been taken up after the death of the Teacher by the eleven disciples who remained after the treason and suicide of Judas? Nowadays it is not pretended that they were impostors, or in any sense bad men, or had any earthly object to gain by what they did; quite the contrary. What power had they to spread the religion of the crucified Jesus if there was nothing superhuman about it? As Jews they were despised by all others; and they were Jews of humble position and attainments. As we have reason to believe, not one of the eleven was a man of learning, education or culture. No one supposes that any of them had the intellect or the moral force of Jesus himself. Not one had remarkable ability of any kind, not to

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speaking of ability for so mighty and exceptional an undertaking. They had in the three years of the public life of Jesus been a good deal with Him, had formed considerable attachment to Him, and had faith in His teachings; but they understood many of His teachings wrongly, and they had not expected Him to be put to death or to rise again. One of the eleven so little expected His resurrection, and was so incredulous in regard to it, that when others told him that the body of Jesus was no longer in the tomb, and that they had seen Him alive, he said he would not believe unless he should himself see in the hands of the supposed Jesus the print of the nails which had bound Him to the cross, and should put his own finger into the print of the nails, and put his own hand into the pierced side of the Lord. The faith of all the disciples up to the time of Christ's death is recorded to have been imperfect and weak. Not one had had faith and courage enough to remain with Him in His extremity. When the soldiers came to arrest the Lord, the first impulse of the impulsive Peter was to fight. That Jesus did not permit, and when immediately afterwards



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Jesus was seized and bound by the soldiers, all the disciples who were with Him forsook Him and fled. Peter and one other disciple followed when He was led away, but they followed afar off. Having got into the court of the house to which Jesus had been taken, Peter, in conversation there with other bystanders, and in the very presence and sight of the Lord, denied repeatedly, and the last time with an oath, that he was a disciple of His, or even knew Him. We hear of no other disciple approaching Him, even at a distance, until after He had been nailed to the terrible cross. Were these such men as, without any miracle having been performed, and without any superhuman authority or strength, could impose on the world the religion of the crucified Jewish Carpenter?

Everything was against such an undertaking; the religion was regarded with scorn and hate by all but the few hundred persons who had become in some sense the disciples of Jesus during His life; His having been crucified as a malefactor was, to the Jews generally, a stumbling-block, and made the new religion seem to the Gentiles utter foolishness. Except the

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superhuman character of our Lord, the superhuman works which He had done, and had empowered His disciples to do, and His resurrection from the dead, the disciples had nothing to go upon, either for their own encouragement or for bringing others to believe. If Jesus had not risen from the dead, and if He had done no work of supernatural power, and if they had themselves no such power, how could they possibly have succeeded in convincing the world that His religion was divine? Or how could they have had the courage, or the desire, to make the attempt? Their success under such circumstances would be a wonder as great as the Resurrection of the crucified Christ, or as the other miracles which are recorded to have been wrought.

It is far easier to account for the wonderful progress of Christianity in the early centuries on the supposition that the miracles and other facts set forth in the New Testament are true, than on any other theory. Christians believe that they are true.

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### SOME DIFFICULTIES AND OBJECTIONS NOTICED.

From what is quite certain about Christ, apart from His miracles, it is not too much to say that He was himself a moral miracle, the effects of which are still going on in the world ; and many think that the divinity of Christ and the truth of His religion sufficiently and clearly appear from these considerations without what are usually designated as miracles ; that the Christian faith does not need the help of these miracles or evidence of them. There is force in this view. Whether it is thought to be absolutely conclusive or not, or whether the other considerations which I have been stating are absolutely conclusive or not, that all have at all events some substantial force is undeniable. Honest unbelievers are not always familiar with them, or with the other evidences of Christianity, and their unbelief sometimes arises from that cause. Other honest unbelievers think that, strong though the argument may be from the considerations stated and others, there is ground for disbelief in the circumstance of the evidences of Christianity not

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being stronger and clearer and more free from difficulty than they seem to such persons to be. Such persons cannot believe, or some of them cannot believe, that, if Christianity were true, God would not have made the evidences of it certain, and not merely more or less probable ; and they think that the evidences at the very most show probability only.

As to believing in Christianity on probable evidence only, we all know that in the case of many or most other matters of importance in this world, things are so constituted (whatever the reason is) that we have to act, and do constantly act, on probable evidence only ; and it is surely therefore the height of unwisdom for anyone to reject Christianity because in his judgment the evidence does not demonstrate its truth, or because there may not be in its favor the kind or degree of evidence which he would like or would expect. How many opinions on worldly matters do we not all hold firmly, and are wise in holding and acting on, though the truth of such opinions is not demonstrable, and may be very far from being demonstrable ? Almost every question of politics, or legislation,

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or business, and every step in life needing consideration, we have to decide, and do decide, on probability only, or on what on the whole may seem to us the probability. Further: we know that many things are true though they cannot be proved at all; and also that many things are true though surrounded by the greatest improbabilities. We have no ground for assuming or asserting that this may not be so in the case of religious evidences also.

Again, some honestly disbelieve or doubt, because it is contrary to their notions of God that there should be suffering in the next world, or so much of it; or that if a way of escaping it exists or is provided, as Christianity teaches, all men should not have been made acquainted with that way, and all men made by the power of God or otherwise to avail themselves of it.

Most of those who seem influenced by either of these objections are not atheists. Atheists constitute a very small proportion of those who, living in Christendom, are not believers in some form of religion. Most unbelievers consider, as Christians do, that the universe was not self-created, and was not the result of blind chance.

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They believe that there is, certainly or probably, a great First Cause, a Personal God, self-existent and eternal, the Creator and Governor of all worlds, and that He is a being of great Goodness, and of transcendent Power, and Knowledge, and Wisdom. To any who so believe the objections to Christianity ought to make no difficulty as against the evidences in its favor, for, as John Stuart Mill has testified, "the Christian religion is open to no objections, either moral or intellectual, which do not apply to the common theory of deism."

As to both grounds of doubt or disbelief which I have mentioned, it is ever to be borne in mind that, apart from Revelation, nothing whatever is known of the next world ; that the earth is but a speck of creation ; and that God's government may have reference to millions of worlds, and to time without end. As against Revelation, or an asserted Revelation, how can we suppose ourselves competent to say, from our little standpoint, and with our limitless ignorance, what are or are not the necessities and needs of the Eternal Universe, as these are known to its Creator and omniscient

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Governor? How can any one of us justify rejecting Revelation on the ground that its teachings as to a future life do not accord with the speculations and guesses which he may choose or may have chosen to indulge in?

In this instance the Christian doctrine is supported by the analogy of the earthly things which we know something about ; for we know from our own personal experience and observation that there is much suffering in this world, whatever there may be in the next ; that there is suffering here in many forms affecting man, affecting even infants of the tenderest age, and affecting the lower creation also ; that the sufferings of the human race are of all kinds, mental and physical, and sometimes are terribly severe, and sometimes endure for life. We know also that there is in this world no end of vice and crime and cruelty. We know further that, while there are practical modes of avoiding much of the suffering, these modes are not known to all sufferers, and many suffer on from want of knowledge which others possess. We know also that there have always been great diversities in the conditions of men in this



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world as respects such suffering, and as respects comfort and happiness generally.

What does this state of things show? It shows to a demonstration that, whatever the reason may be, the constitution of the universe is certainly such, that suffering and the sufferers' ignorance of remedies are not inconsistent with the Power and other Attributes which belong to the Supreme Governor of all things, and are not inconsistent with the perfect wisdom and benevolence which are ascribed to Him both by Christians and by most non-Christians who live in Christian lands. The full explanations which would enable us to clearly see the reason and to clearly perceive the consistency, have not hitherto been revealed, and may require (and I dare say do require) other faculties than we now have to understand or fully appreciate them. But if there is certainly much suffering in this life, the fact is material in considering what is revealed as to there being suffering in the next life also. There is no authority whatever for any man to assume and insist, as against Christianity, that in the matter of suffering the case is wholly different in the next life from what we see and

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know as to this life. Revelation, if we believe it, gives us some insight into the spiritual world, but beyond what we may thus learn there is utter darkness.

In reference to suffering in the next world, as revealed in the Scriptures, Bishop Butler in his great work has these observations : “ All shadow of injustice, and indeed all harsh appearances in the economy of Providence, would be lost if we would keep in mind that every merciful allowance shall be made, and that no more will be required of any one than what might equitably be expected of him from the circumstances in which he was placed, and not what might have been expected had he been placed under other circumstances ; that is, in Scripture language, that every man shall be accepted according to what he had, not according to what he had not.” The rules of this moral government are not rules of ignorant, weak and sinful man’s devising, but are rules of which the all-knowing, all-just, all-holy, and all-wise God is the author. Let none of us deceive himself with a false hope of safety, or trust his eternal life to what a sin-loving heart may suggest, instead of earnestly and

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gratefully accepting the teachings of the God man, the Lord from Heaven.

### FURTHER THOUGHTS FOR DOUBTERS AND OTHERS.

One consideration more on the general question : it is a certain fact that from a period antecedent to Christianity's becoming the national religion of the Roman Empire up to the present time, the immense majority of the world's thinkers have deemed the evidences of Christianity as a supernatural religion to be sufficient to establish its character in that respect, notwithstanding all the difficulties and objections which have from time to time been urged with more or less force ; and these men have felt themselves able to accept the religion as true, and with all their hearts to receive and hold it as divine. Amongst these great thinkers have been such grand men in intellectual attainment as Paul of Tarsus in Apostolic times ; as Justin, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius and Augustine, in the early centuries ; as Leibnitz, Haller, Copernicus, Kepler, Bacon, Newton, Cuvier, Ray, Brewster, Faraday, Agassiz, Morse and Mivart, amongst scientists

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who have passed away ; as Lord Kelvin and Professor Stokes, amongst modern physicists ; as Niebuhr, the great historian of whom I have already spoken ; as Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Cairns and Lord Selborne (not to name others) amongst eminent English judges ; as the late Mr. Gladstone, a profound and successful seeker after truth in many fields ; as our own Sir Daniel Wilson and Sir William Dawson, both of whom (recently deceased) had a world-wide fame in their several departments of science and learning, and were at the same time amongst the most earnest and active of Christians ; and as a very host of other able and learned scientists, philosophers, historians, judges, statesmen, legislators, literary men and theologians, of the highest distinction, in all countries and all ages. That the evidences have been sufficient thus to satisfy the great majority of cultured, thinking men in civilized lands for many centuries shows that at all events there must be a good deal in those evidences and more than an earnest intelligent inquirer can reasonably or safely disregard.

Again : if, as against the evidences and

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arguments in favor of Christianity, the most that an agnostic or a sceptic can say is, that the evidences are not sufficient to demonstrate the truth of Christianity, or that in his judgment the probabilities in its favor are outweighed by improbabilities in the evidences or the doctrines, his position implies the at least possible truth of Christianity. Indeed, the name which unbelievers now prefer to all others is "agnostics," or persons who disclaim actual knowledge or certainty. But if Christianity is true, it is of unspeakable importance, with reference both to the eternal life after death and to the good of the race in this world, that Christianity should be accepted ; while if not true, there is on the one hand at least no harm in accepting it, and in accepting it heartily and unreservedly, and on the other hand there is, beyond all doubt as regards this life, much good in so accepting it. If, therefore, Christianity is even possibly true, common sense and prudence and humanity alike require its acceptance, notwithstanding arguments against it which, however strong they may seem to any, leave its truth to be a possibility. In all other affairs, prudent and sensible

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men so act, and in other affairs the stake is infinitely less than in this matter of Religion.

If, notwithstanding these considerations and others which bear in the same direction, any honest inquirer finds that the evidences which have satisfied so many learned thinkers for many ages fail to satisfy his understanding, and if he has been led to look upon some of the arguments against Christianity as overwhelmingly stronger than the arguments for it, why should he endeavor to impress that opinion on others? Why should he want to lessen the wonderful Teacher's influence in this world for good? If he is a lover of his race, why, doubt as he may the logical or critical sufficiency of the evidences, should he not, in spite of his doubts, take the side of the wise and loving Jesus, in the work of good for which He laid down His life? Why, at all events, should he join a hostile camp? Why, on the contrary, and notwithstanding critical and other difficulties if he has these, should he not leave to those who believe, the undisturbed use of Christianity for the beneficent work of advancing right living and consequent happiness in the world?

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Very few can persuade themselves that the race would not suffer, and suffer unspeakably, by the blotting out of the religion of Christ. A distinguished unbeliever among ourselves, who has written much against Christianity, has in one of these writings sent forth eloquent words of anxiety and warning to those who think with him that a "collapse of faith" is at hand, that as the result of science and criticism combined, "belief in Christianity as a revealed and supernatural religion has given way," has received a "mortal blow."

I shall give you an extract from his words of warning: "What then is likely to be the effect of this revolution on morality? . . . What will become of the brotherhood of men and of the very idea of humanity? Historically these beliefs are evidently Christian. Will they survive the doctrines, with which in the Christian creed they are inseparably connected, of the universal fatherhood of God, and of the fraternal relation of all men to Christ? 'God,' says the New Testament, 'hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.' Blot out the name of the Creator,



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and on what does this assertion of the unity and virtual equality of mankind rest? What principle forbids the stronger races or those that have superior firearms to prey upon the weaker? What guards the sanctity of human life, if there is nothing more divine in man than in any other animal?"

May we not add: What in the absence of Christianity would guard *anything* which is distasteful to the natural heart, or stands in the way of a man's desires? But Christians do not believe that a "collapse of faith" is impending; they do not believe that Christianity has received its "mortal blow"; they do not believe that faith in it has "given way." A prophecy of the near destruction of Christianity has been often written and often spoken, with more or less seeming reason, since the founder of Christianity was crucified on Mount Calvary; but the prophecy has never come true, and Christians do not believe that it ever will. Science may have shown errors in some former interpretations of portions of the Old Testament. Criticism may have corrected other popular errors in the case of both Testaments. It is

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right and desirable that errors should be corrected ; all intelligent Christians so hold. But, as regards the essential facts and essential doctrines of Christianity, Christians perceive nothing to fear from either science or criticism. The great majority of the ablest and most learned scientists and critics have been Christians ; and in the full light of science and criticism, Christianity, of all beliefs positive or negative, continues to be, in the general judgment of the civilized world, the best belief to live in, and the safest belief to die in.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In view of the whole subject, I trust I may say with all sincerity for myself (I know I may say for many of my hearers or readers, I wish I might say for all), that in the great battle of Religion and Morality we and all ours take the side of the Man of Nazareth. The history of the world has presented no leader like Him. We gladly take Him for our Leader, and for our King, our Master, our Example, our Guide. We gladly recognize Him as God-man, a Messenger from heaven, the Redeemer of the world. Believing

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what the New Testament tells of His life and teachings, we love Him dearly. In the light of His teachings, we mourn over the imperfections and shortcomings and sins of our lives. Our earnest desire is that, God helping us, we and all ours should be like this Jesus, should possess His spirit, should be doers of the Father's will, and should live and die in the blessed hope that after our earthly lives are over we shall be forever with the Lord who bought us, and with those who on earth are dear to us, as we know or believe they are dear to Him.

As patriots and philanthropists, then, as deeply concerned for the earthly well-being of our families and our friends, of our country and our race, now and in the future ; and above all, as creatures and servants of the Most High God ; as having, ourselves and our fellows, immortal lives to think of, and (if we can) to provide for ; and as having had communicated to us a religion of love and hope and holiness, an Atoning Saviour, a Pardoning God, a Sanctifying Holy Spirit, let us all hold fast unto the end our Christian faith, without wavering ; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to all good works.



## APPENDIX.

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THE following is the substance of part of a subsequent Address, delivered February 13th, 1898, before the Young Men's Christian Association of the Medical Faculties of the University of Toronto and of Trinity Medical College, at the request of the Association, and afterwards published with the consent of the lecturer for distribution amongst the students. These extracts are added here as containing further observations on some of the topics of the first lecture :

. . . With the object of assisting you I should be glad to be able to say something that may help any of you to use in the most beneficial way practicable the influence which in your future lives you may possess or acquire. For that purpose, then, my first remark is, that if in the course of my own long and active life I have learned one lesson more distinctly than another, it is that the influence of a man or woman for good, as regards even this world, is immensely promoted by having faith in Christianity.

. . . Some young men, and some who are not young, think it smart to laugh at religion in general, or at some of its doctrines ; and this without having studied the subject in (if at all) more than a very partial and superficial manner. Such mockery, permit me to say, is rude and foolish conceit on the part of any who indulge in it, considering that the subject is of transcendent importance ; that the religion of Jesus is, and always has been, very dear to multitudes of the best people everywhere ; that a great host of men of high intellect and great learning have in all ages believed in it ; and that so many of the most eminent unbelievers in the supernatural testify to the great blessings which the world owes and will never cease to owe to Christianity.

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As for Christianity being dead or dying, as some of its adversaries affirm, this can be shown by most satisfactory evidence not to be true. A like assertion as to Christianity being in a dying condition was in past ages often made; but the facts always turned out otherwise. The men who nearly nineteen hundred years ago had the Founder of Christianity put to death, thought that by that act they had extinguished the religion which He taught. But, instead of His religion being so extinguished, its adherents increased immensely from that day, both in numbers and in devotion; and so increased far more rapidly than they had done before. Early assailants of this religion, after its Founder's death, thought repeatedly that they had destroyed it by their arguments and otherwise. Kings and emperors for many centuries thought that they could destroy it, if not by arguments, yet by persecutions of the fiercest kinds and by cruel martyrdoms. But all failed. Voltaire, in the eighteenth century, believed and prophesied that "before the beginning of the nineteenth century Christianity will have disappeared from the earth." The beginning of the nineteenth century came, and Christianity had not disappeared. We are now near the end of that century, and Christianity not only still exists, but never before showed greater evidences of both life and permanency. Never before had so large a number of the world's population faith in some form of Christianity as is the case now.

A century ago the Christian population of the world (using here the word "Christian" in its broadest sense) was estimated at less than 200 millions; it is now upwards of 400 millions.

While in modern times there has been a great increase in the religious activity, and religious attainments generally, of the old churches, the number of new and powerful organizations which have sprung up with like objects is most remarkable. Some of these are independent of particular churches, and others are in close connection with existing churches. It is only about 150 years since the Methodists came into existence as a separate organization, and they have now become one of the greatest Protestant denominations in Christendom. Sunday-schools for religious training are of still more modern origin; and it is

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estimated that the number of scholars now receiving instruction in them is nearly twenty-three millions; a most significant fact, seeing that Sunday-schools are amongst the most powerful agencies of the Christian faith. The Religious Tract Society was formed in London less than a century ago, and its issues since are counted in millions, and comprise translations into almost all the languages spoken in the world. The British and Foreign Bible Society has been said to be the greatest agency ever devised for the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures, and it had no existence until the present century (1804). The Young Men's Christian Associations are of still more recent origin than these societies, and are now in active operation in almost every part of the world. The same may be said of the Women's Christian Associations of various kinds, the Societies of Christian Endeavor, the Epworth Leagues, the Salvation Army, and other new Christian enterprises. These are Protestant institutions. I think I see, also, amongst Roman Catholics, increased interest during the same period in those great truths which, happily, Roman Catholics and Protestants hold in common. The progress of Christianity includes both Roman Catholics and Protestants.

So, modern missions have been in operation for but a century, and now the great missionary societies at work are reckoned by the hundred, and their operations extend to all parts of heathendom, and have been attended with much success amongst heathen peoples. Protestant missions have at work an estimated force of nearly ten thousand foreign missionaries, and more than fifty thousand native missionaries. This great army of Christian workers minister to 1,250,000 communicants in mission churches, and have three or four millions (some estimate five millions) of adherents who were previously heathen. Through the agency of missions, some lands which a century ago and less were heathen lands are now distinctly Christian.

These missions have also accomplished incidentally much that is valuable to the human race with reference to this life, as well as accomplishing much in regard to the infinitely more important matter of the life to come. They have accomplished great



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things in all the departments of knowledge, learning and science; great things in advancing civilization and all that civilization implies; and great things in promoting morality, a matter more important than all others relating to this life. On this subject I find the following cited from the testimony of Lord Lawrence, who was Viceroy and Governor-General of India from 1864 to 1869, and had thirty years' previous experience there: "I believe, notwithstanding all that the English people have done to benefit India, the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined." Also the following from Sir Bartle Frere, formerly Governor of Bombay, and afterwards of the Cape of Good Hope: "I assure you that, whatever you have been told to the contrary, the teachings of Christianity amongst the one hundred and sixty millions of civilized, industrious Hindus and Mohammedans in India, have effected changes, moral, social and political, which for extent and rapidity of effect are far more extraordinary than anything else you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe." The same thing may be said, and in at least some cases with equal force, as to all other countries in which Christian missionaries have been at work. In a word, the facts place beyond well-founded doubt that "Christian missionaries are the most effective means ever brought to bear upon the social, civil, commercial, moral and spiritual interests of mankind." The truth of Christianity and faith in it have produced these results.

Some suppose that Christianity has fallen back in the United States, and thence infer that it has fallen back everywhere. But it has not fallen back in the United States, any more than elsewhere. Official census returns and other well-authenticated data show that, notwithstanding all the irreligion which prevails there as it does elsewhere, Christianity is more full of life in the United States now than it ever was before; that its vitality has increased in every decade of the century of which we have materials for judging; and has so increased not only absolutely, but also relatively to the population. This appears from, for example, what has been ascertained of the comparative number of churches at different periods, the comparative accommodation afforded,

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the comparative number of church members, ministers, Sunday-school teachers and Sunday-school pupils, the comparative value of church property, and the comparative amounts contributed annually for missions and other religious objects.

Thus, so far from there having been a dying out of Christianity in the United States or elsewhere, ascertained facts show greatly increased life and vigor there and throughout the world, and make plain that, rampant as agnosticism or unbelief may seem in some respects to be, if any of you have been inclined on that account, or any other, to regard Christianity as a dying belief or a dying institution, you are deceiving yourselves. The truth is the very reverse.

Undoubtedly, though Christianity has been steadily advancing, yet there is at the same time, unhappily, much irreligion in all nominally Christian lands; but this is not a new thing; there has always been irreligion; and so, as Christians generally believe, there will continue to be until Christ comes in person to reign on the earth. This irreligion is, in part, in the form of intellectual unbelief; but it is much more in the form of crime, vice, injustice, cruelty, falsehood and selfishness of every kind—all of which Christianity condemns, and has declared war against.

. . . The influence of Christianity on the character of men is, under God, owing, not to its moral teachings merely, but, in connection with these moral teachings, is owing to the facts and doctrines of Christianity. These give incalculable force to the moral teachings. As the result of Christian teachings, the actual historical fact is, that loving faith in our Heavenly Father and His Eternal Son has, in the case of millions of Christian men and Christian women in the last nineteen centuries, been a great and mighty power for good; and it is a great and mighty power for good still; and so, doubtless, will be for ever.

The faith of all believers in Christianity is not equally strong, nor is the obedience of all equally full. It is a doctrine of the Church to which I belong that, "no mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed." I believe that no important Christian denomination teaches the absolute

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and uninterrupted sinlessness of all or any Christians, not of even the best of them. On the contrary, all Christian churches concur in holding that any Christian may be "overtaken in a fault"; as St. Peter was when he denied his Master, and on other occasions. The like was the case with some Old Testament saints and worthies. But when a Christian has sinned he remembers his sin with shame and humiliation; and his comfort is, that before God sin repented of is sin forgiven; that if we confess our sins, we are assured our Heavenly Father is "faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; that "if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous"; and that He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. In dealing with such cases, St. Paul gave this direction: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

While absolute perfection of conduct or character may not be attained or attainable by any person in this life, experience has shown that none can really believe the doctrines which Christ taught, and in any degree really love Him, the God-man, the Divine Messenger of Love, without being in some measure influenced by their faith in Him, and manifesting in their lives and character something of the Christian spirit. Love to God and to Christ the Son begets likeness to the character which God approves and Christ exemplified; and, though a Christian may not be perfect, his efforts are in the direction of perfection. It is a matter of certain fact that millions have loved, and millions are loving, the Father and Son sufficiently to strive with all their hearts to conform themselves (by God's grace) to all Christ's teachings; and that multitudes in all ages have demonstrated the power of Christianity over the heart and conduct by enduring for its sake the greatest possible hardships, sacrifices and sufferings. It is interesting to note that every form of Christianity has had its martyrs for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As to Christianity being a hindrance to the well-being of the

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race, as some allow themselves to think or say, the proposition sounds supremely absurd to most men of fair minds, whether they are Christians or not. Thomas Carlyle did not believe in Christianity as a supernatural religion ; but he said of it : "The Christian religion must ever be regarded as the crowning glory, or, rather, the life and soul, of our whole modern culture." So Matthew Arnold, though very far from being an orthodox Christian, had such words as these to say of the Christian religion and its influence : "Men are not mistaken in thinking that Christianity has done them good, [are not mistaken] in loving it, in wishing to listen to those who will talk to them about what they love, and (they) will talk of it with admiration and gratitude. . . . Christianity is truly . . . the greatest and happiest stroke ever yet made for human perfection. Men do not err, they are on firm ground of experience, when they say that they have practically found Christianity to be something incomparably beneficent."

Then again, Mr. Lecky, the rationalist historian, has these observations : "Christianity, the life of morality, the basis of civilization, has regenerated the world." "It (the Christian religion) softens the character, purifies and directs the imagination, blends insensibly with habitual modes of thought, and, without revolutionizing, gives a tone and bias to all forms of action." "As a matter of fact, Christianity has done more to quicken the affections of mankind, to create a pure and merciful idea, than any other influence that has ever acted upon the world." "The great characteristic of Christianity is that it has been the main source of the moral development of Europe, and that it has discharged this office, not so much by the inculcation of a system of ethics, however pure, as by the assimilating and attractive influence of a perfect ideal. The moral progress of mankind can never cease to be distinctively and intensely Christian as long as it consists of a gradual approximation to the character of the Christian Founder. There is, indeed, nothing more wonderful in the history of the human race than the way in which that ideal has traversed the lapse of ages, acquiring new strength and beauty with each advance of civilization, and

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infusing its beneficent influence into every sphere of thought and action."

No ; the Christianity of the Bible is intensely opposite of a hindrance to humanity or human progress ; it is a mighty power, the mightiest of all powers, for purifying and humanizing and civilizing, as well as for preparing for the blessedness of an immortal life in heaven.

In view of these considerations, if Christianity were not true, a lover of his race might for the sake of the beneficial influence on the world regret that Christianity is not true ; but a candid, intelligent examination of its evidences satisfies most inquirers that it is true. If any of you think at present that these evidences do not prove its truth, let it be remembered that many learned men and good men have thought, and still think, the proof ample. But what if the evidences amount to a greater or less degree of probability only ? Do not throw away your faith on that account. There is no man or woman who does not believe, and rightly believe, a hundred things on grounds of probability which, to say the least, are inferior to the probabilities that favor Christianity. Why not believe in Christianity on like probable evidence ? Why should any one allow himself to treat as nothing the testimony which there is in its favor, whether in his opinion such evidence amounts to demonstration or not ? Why should he stumble at some supposed difficulty, in the evidence or otherwise, for which he cannot find what may seem to him a satisfactory solution ? There are difficulties in everything. There are difficulties and mysteries in every branch of science ; in every department of nature ; in the functions of our bodies ; in the workings of our minds. Even in mathematics, the science of demonstration, there are things which are true and yet incomprehensible. What though there are difficulties and mysteries in Christianity also ? If it presents difficulties and mysteries, consider also what the evidences are in its favor. Let these be studied and weighed. Its proofs are many and various. Among Christians who have examined them, some are more impressed with one line of evidence and some with another. It is only necessary that every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind.

## PROGRESS IN LAST CENTURY.

As the conclusion of the whole matter, my sisters and brothers, I exhort you, being as a layman one of yourselves, that you hold fast the Christian faith as being a faith necessary and good for both worlds; for this world, as we know; and for the next world, as for strong reasons, and in common with a multitude of the world's greatest thinkers and best men and women, we heartily believe. Hold fast to the Christian faith, as good for yourselves, good for those whom you love, and good for those whom from time to time you may influence. Above all, hold fast to your Christian faith from gratitude and love to the loving Father and God of all, and to His loving Son, who from love laid down His life for us.

My sisters and brothers, think on these things; and may the Spirit of the Eternal Father have His abode in your minds and hearts forever.

### NOTE AS TO PROGRESS IN 19TH CENTURY.

In further illustration of what is said in the two lectures as to the present condition of religious belief, the following extracts from an article by the Rev. Dr. Parkhurst in the *North American Review* for July, 1885, with respect to the United States, are interesting:

“‘In the time of Aaron Burr,’ says Parton, ‘it was confidently predicted that Christianity could not survive two more generations.’ Of the same period another writer states that, ‘wild and vague expectations were everywhere entertained, especially among the young, of a new order of things about to commence, in which Christianity would be laid aside as an obsolete system.’ Considerably more than a century ago Voltaire said: ‘Before the beginning of the nineteenth century Christianity will have disappeared from the earth.’ It is an instructive coincidence that the room in which Voltaire uttered these words has since been used as a Bible repository. . . .

“In the year 1800 there were in the United States 3,030 evangelical churches; in 1850, 43,072; in 1870, 70,148; and



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1880, 97,090 ; a gain of 27,000 in ten years, ending in 1880.  
. . . As gleaned from the 'year-books' and 'church minutes,' the number of communicants in evangelical churches in the United States has been as follows : In 1800, 364,000 ; in 1850, 3,529,000 ; in 1870, 6,673,000 ; and in 1880, 10,065,000. Of course, during all this time there was an immense increase in population, but the increase in church membership a good deal more than kept pace with that of population. Taking the whole country through, there was in 1800 one evangelical communicant to every  $14\frac{1}{2}$  inhabitants ; in 1850, one to every  $6\frac{1}{2}$  ; in 1870, one to every  $5\frac{3}{4}$  ; and in 1880, one to every 5. Even during the period since 1850, in which materialism and rationalism have been subjecting Protestantism to so severe a strain, while the increase in population has been 116 per cent., the increase in communicants of Protestant evangelical churches in the United States has been 185 per cent.

"The same pronounced drift Christianwards evinces itself if we consider the matter of American colleges and college students. Writing in 1810, Bishop Meade, of Virginia, said : 'I can truly say that in every educated young man in Virginia whom I met I expected to find a sceptic, if not an avowed infidel.' When Dr. Dwight became President of Yale College in 1795, only five of the students were church members. In the early part of Dr. Appleton's presidency of Bowdoin, only one student was a professing Christian. In 1830, according to returns obtained from American colleges, 26 per cent. of the students were professing Christians ; in 1850, 38 per cent. ; in 1865, 46 per cent. ; and in 1880, according to the year-book of the Young Men's Christian Association, out of 12,063 students in 65 colleges, 6,081, or a little more than half, were professors of religion. . . .

"So far from Christianity betraying the first symptoms of exhaustion, there has been no time since the Jordan baptism of Jesus when Christianity has moved with such gigantic strides and put forth efforts so vigorous and herculean as during these years of our own century, when the disciples of Voltaire and the imitators of Paine have been most active. . . . It is



## SCIENTISTS IN UNITED STATES.

during this time, in fact within the last forty years of it, that there have sprung up all our Young Men's Christian Associations, with organizations extending north and south, east and west, in North America and South, Europe, Asia, the Sandwich Islands, Australia, Madagascar. . . . Our American Sunday-schools, too, are all of them a growth of the present century, numbering only half a million pupils in 1830, with an increase of six millions in the fifty years following. It is during the last eighty years, likewise, that the American Church has shown its colossal vigor in the inauguration of its missionary enterprises. Beginning with the second decade of our century, with a contribution of \$200,000, the total amount raised for home and foreign missions in this country up to 1880 was \$129,000,000, and 88 per cent. of that was raised during the last thirty years; 70,000 mission communicants in 1830 had become 210,000 in 1850, and 850,000 in 1880. All of this, to say nothing of other organizations of evangelization and amelioration, the Bible Society, the Tract Society, and the rest, has sprung from the fecund soil of our own magnificent Gospel century."

### NOTE AS TO SCIENTIFIC MEN IN UNITED STATES.

In reminding my Woodstock audience of some of the world's thinkers whose names are more or less familiar as of men who were or are distinguished in science, and at the same time believers in Christianity, I named no natives of the neighboring Republic, though such men abound there; Canadians are less familiar with them than with the names I had given in my lecture. After the lecture was in type, it occurred to me to supply the omission by getting needed information from my friend and pastor, the Rev. Dr. Kellogg (since deceased). He was a native of the United States, had been educated there, had spent there most of his life and ministry, and had a wide and just reputation both in Europe and America for varied and accurate learning, and as a profound thinker on all subjects with which in his active life he had to do. The following is

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from the reply which he was kind enough to send to my application :

“ As for distinguished American scientists who have been or are decided believers in Evangelical Christianity, the following names occur to me : Among geologists—First, Professor James B. Dana, of Yale University, to whose authority, if I recollect aright, Mr. Gladstone confidently appealed in one of his recent essays in apologetics ; also Professor G. Frederick Wright, of the University of Oberlin, a scholar whose extensive original researches have made him one of the leading authorities on the glacial age on this continent ; and, again, Professor Le Conte, of the University of California, another geologist of repute, a decided evolutionist of the *theistic* type, but therewith also a pronounced believer. Then might be named Professor Young, of Princeton College, one of the first astronomers in the States ; and, in the medical profession, Dr. Willard Parker, of New York, not long ago deceased, commonly reputed to have stood at the head of his profession in surgery ; and the late Dr. Agnew, for a long time one of the most distinguished oculists in the States ; all of them decided Christian men. The late Professor Arnold Guyot, of Princeton, who had an enviable reputation as an authority in Physical Geography and Geology on both sides the Atlantic, it was my privilege for many years to know as a man of the most devout evangelical spirit. I remember well a remark which I once heard from him in a lecture to my own class in the college, which well shows his position : ‘ Young gentlemen, God has written two books, the book of the Word and the book of the Rocks, and it is perfectly certain that He has written the same thing in both of these books. If, in any case, we are not able to see this distinctly, we must consider that it can only be because our knowledge and understanding of one or both of the two books is as yet imperfect.’ To these names I might add from a somewhat earlier generation, the late Professor Joseph Henry, of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C., and Professor Samuel Morse, whose names are both closely connected with the invention of the electric telegraph ; as also many others ; but these will probably suffice for your purpose.”

## JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

I received a subsequent note from Dr. Kellogg, which I have pleasure in adding, as follows :

“ I had but just sent my note and enclosure to you this morning, when in one of my papers I found two extracts bearing on the subject of your lecture, which are from such authority and so excellent, that I take the liberty to send them, thinking that possibly you might like to make use of one or both of them.

“ The first is from the American poet and man of letters, James Russell Lowell, lately U. S. Minister to Great Britain. If not a scientific man, yet his high reputation as a gentleman of high and broad culture, and of extensive opportunities of observation, will make his words to have weight with many. On a certain public occasion in England several persons had expressed themselves in a contemptuous way regarding Christianity, when Mr. Lowell, in his speech, said : ‘ When the microscopic search of scepticism has turned its attention to human society, and found a spot on this planet ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when sceptics can find such a place, ten miles square, on this globe, where the Gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way, and laid the foundations, and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the sceptical *literati* to move thither, and there ventilate their views.’

“ The second extract is from Professor Mbegard, occupant of the chair of philosophy in the University of Copenhagen, who, until recently, was regarded as one of the chief representatives of philosophic atheism in Denmark. According to the *Semeur Vaudois*, he has recently published a second edition of his works, in the introduction to which he uses the following words : ‘ The experience of life, its sufferings and griefs, have shaken my soul, and have broken the foundations upon which I formerly thought I could build. Full of faith in the sufficiency of science, I thought to have found in it a sure refuge from all the contingencies of life. This illusion is vanished ; when the tempest came which plunged me in sorrow, the moorings, the cable of

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science, broke like thread. Then I seized upon that help which many before me have laid hold of. I sought and found peace in God. Since then I have certainly not abandoned science, but have assigned to it another place in my life.' ”

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The following are other observations by Mr. Lowell on the same subject. I take them from the Rev. R. E. Welsh's book, “In Relief of Doubt” :

“I fear that when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not, perhaps, aware how much we are sustained by an enormous mass of religious feeling and religious conviction; so that, whatever it may be safe for us to think, for us who have had great advantages, and have been brought up in such a way that a certain moral direction has been given to our character, I do not know what would become of the less favored classes of mankind, if they undertook to play the same game.

“Any Christian system of religion, in spite of defects, is ‘infinitely preferable to any form of polite and polished scepticism which gathers as its votaries the degenerate sons of heroic ancestors, who, having been trained in a society and educated in schools the foundations of which were laid by men of faith and piety, now turn and kick down the ladder by which they have climbed up, and persuaded men to live without God and leave them to die without hope. These men, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without a religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their carcasses like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution.’ ”

## STATISTICS OF PROGRESS 1800 TO 1900.

An illustration of Christian progress up to the end of the century, 1900, is contained in a paper in the New York *Public Opinion*, of which the following is a condensation :

“There has been published in the American papers a very carefully-prepared statement from the pen of Rev. Dr. Daniel Rochester, under the caption, “Is the Church Still Gaining, at the Close of the Century?” in which there is made a comparison between the strength of the Church in 1800 and in 1900. Of course, the term “Church” is used in a wide sense, and includes all *evangelical* bodies. Take, for instance, the two following tables :

| YEAR.     | CHURCHES. | MINISTERS. | COMMUNICANTS. |
|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| 1800..... | 3,030     | 2,651      | 364,872       |
| 1850..... | 43,072    | 25,555     | 3,529,988     |
| 1870..... | 70,148    | 47,609     | 6,673,396     |
| 1880..... | 97,090    | 59,870     | 10,065,963    |
| 1890..... | 151,172   | 98,185     | 13,823,618    |
| 1900..... | 172,406   | 126,046    | 17,784,475    |

“During the last twenty years there has been an increase of 75,316 churches and 56,176 ministers.

“The increase in the communicants during the last half century is thus stated:

|                         |           |              |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| From 1850 to 1870 ..... | 3,143,400 | in 20 years. |
| “ 1870 “ 1880 .....     | 3,392,267 | “ 10 “       |
| “ 1880 “ 1890 .....     | 3,757,555 | “ 10 “       |
| “ 1890 “ 1900 .....     | 3,960,857 | “ 10 “       |

“Comparing the whole population with the total *evangelical* communicants, there are the following striking results :

|       |     |             |          |              |
|-------|-----|-------------|----------|--------------|
| 1800, | one | communicant | in 14.50 | inhabitants. |
| 1850, | “   | “           | 6.57     | “            |
| 1870, | “   | “           | 5.78     | “            |
| 1880, | “   | “           | 5.00     | “            |
| 1890, | “   | “           | 4.53     | “            |
| 1900, | “   | “           | 4.28     | “            |

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(I have seen no analysis for the last decade, 1890-1900, embracing all denominations. There has been an increase in all the principal denominations in the United States during this period, but it appears that there is a large number of bodies reported in the census of 1890 in regard to which there is no information at all respecting the last ten years, or such very incomplete information as does not furnish a basis for the presentation of their present condition.)

The following figures show the number of church members for the *larger* denominations in 1890 and 1900 respectively :

|                                     | 1890.     | 1900.     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Baptists (three branches) . . . . . | 3,429,505 | 4,446,233 |
| Roman Catholics . . . . .           | 6,242,267 | 8,610,226 |
| Congregationalists . . . . .        | 512,771   | 629,874   |
| Disciples of Christ . . . . .       | 871,017   | 1,149,982 |
| Episcopalians (two branches) . .    | 540,489   | 726,174   |
| Lutherans (five bodies) . . . . .   | 1,231,072 | 1,665,878 |
| Methodists (six bodies) . . . . .   | 4,411,324 | 5,582,593 |
| Presbyterians (six bodies) . . . .  | 1,262,965 | 1,546,416 |
| United Brethren (two bodies) .      | 225,281   | 470,484   |

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(The following is condensed from an article by Rev. J. G. K. McClure.)

“Either in its manifest influence or in its latent resources Christianity has come to the close of every century at an advance. What does the observer of religion to-day find? First, there are what may be called laboratory returns. *Geographically*, ever since Carey in 1793 started from England to India, Christianity has believed itself to be under world-wide marching orders. Through its scouts it has entered hitherto impenetrable districts, until continents, islands, fastnesses, have heard its living, loving message. Advance into previously unoccupied territory, which even fifty years ago was hailed with surprise, has become a matter of course. Dr. George Smith said that ‘five great regions of the world are as yet unreached by the missionary—Thibet and High Asia, Arabia, the Soudan, Amazonia, and Russia in Asia.’



## RECENT PROGRESS.

But within a tenmonth, merely as one amongst the daily mass of general telegraphic messages, was this: 'The first through train reached Khartoum to-day.' That word, so romantic and momentous, received hardly a passing public notice. The Soudan open, every other land is expected to be open.

"*Politically*, Christianity has woven its ideas into the web of national life with an ever-wider woof. The test of national integrity, in rulers and in people alike, is conformity to Christian principles. The criticisms passed by John Stuart Mill on the state are criticisms suggested to him by the essential teachings of Christianity. The 'civic conscience' of Christendom has become a factor to be primarily reckoned with by all legislators; the inspirer of that conscience is Christianity. The nations thus influenced are becoming the world-rulers. They practically divide the earth between them, either in the form of colonies, suzerainties, or 'spheres of influence.' The population of those countries whose accepted ideals and standards of moral conduct are Christian is placed at almost 500,000,000. These govern, or help to shape, the political action of almost 900,000,000 of the world's inhabitants.

"The achievements wrought by Christianity in the *social* conditions of the world are luminous. To-day the results wrought by Christianity in ameliorating or destroying vicious social customs roll up such returns as pronounce Christianity a blessing to the home and to the individual from Natal to Point Barrow. The number of its adherents does not necessarily indicate the condition of a cause. But when one feature of a cause is its 150 societies in the heathen world, whose missionaries count 6,000, and whose native preachers, teachers, and helpers are 68,500, and whose converts are over 4,000,000, the capabilities and aggressive nature of the cause become apparent. This one arm of the service has put the Bible, in part or as a whole, into over 350 languages, which nine-tenths of the human race can read, has established schools, colleges, printing-presses, hospitals, asylums, churches, has sought out the famished, the leprous, the outcast, has aimed to exemplify honesty, industry, purity, self-control, and self-dignity—and has seen its ideas assume larger



## APPENDIX.

and larger displacing and recreative power. While this impact upon the foreign world has been progressing, Christianity has strengthened and increased her resources in all home lands. Her spirit it is, whether acknowledged or unacknowledged, that pervades the chief glories of modern civilization, its safety, its integrity, and its helpfulness.

“Besides laboratory returns there are other returns, not so tangible perhaps, but none the less existent and significant. Christianity has achieved new faith in itself. The study of comparative religions has given to Christianity an established conviction of its own pre-eminence. It believes that it is the final and complete religion. A new understanding of the Scriptures has been secured. Their place is more fixed and their mission more practicable than ever. Criticism has been very incisive and has cut away many theories concerning the nature of inspiration that had nothing to do with the validity and usefulness of the Scriptures, but the pre-eminence of the Scriptures both remains and triumphs.”

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(The recent progress of Christianity may be further illustrated by the case of the Societies of Christian Endeavor, the first of which was established only twenty years ago.)

The *Christian Endeavor World*, in its special anniversary issue, 1901, gives the following summary of the society's achievement during the past twenty years :

“In 1881, a single society ; in 1901, societies to the number of 60,750.

“In 1881, a membership of 57 ; in 1901, a membership of 3,500,000.

“In 1881, a single denomination touched ; in 1901, more than forty denominations permeated.

“In 1881, an extreme corner of one country ; in 1901, all countries on the face of the earth.

“In 1881, the English language ; in 1901, literature in Chinese, Japanese, Malagasy, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Bulgarian, Armenian, Siamese, German, French, Italian, Greek,

## CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR ASSOCIATIONS.

Spanish, Swedish, Dutch, Norwegian, Welsh, Austrian, Coptic, Mexican, Portuguese, Indian, the many tongues of India and Africa.

“In 1881, no national organization dreamed of; in 1901, national Christian Endeavor organizations in the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Australia, France, Spain, Germany, South Africa, India, China, Mexico, Japan.

“In 1881, no periodical thought of; in 1901, the *Christian Endeavor World*, the English *Christian Endeavour*, the Japanese *Endeavor*, the Australian *Golden Link and Roll Call*, the South African *Golden Chain*, the Spanish *Esfuerzo Cristiano*, the Mexican *Esforzador*, the German *Jugend-Hilfe* and *Mitarbeiter*, the Indian *Endeavourer*, the Canadian *Banner*, the Jamaican *Gem*, the Irish *Endeavorer*, the Welsh *Lamp*, besides a throng of state, city and denominational Christian Endeavor organs.

“In 1881, only the Young People’s Society; in 1901, the juniors, intermediate, seniors, floating societies, mothers’ societies, prison societies, travellers’ societies, societies in factories, schools, colleges, almshouses and asylums.

“In 1881, a single newspaper article; in 1901, scores of books, hundreds of pamphlets, and Christian Endeavor articles by the thousand every week in the leading secular and religious journals of the world. . . .”



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